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Sunny days ahead

After 70 years, Gunderson Uniform & Linen Rental looks toward a bright future
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By Lori Kaye Lodes



Gunderson Uniform & Linen Rental currently runs 21 routes throughout their service area.

For 70 years, Gunderson Uniform & Linen Rental in Menasha has been doing laundry, carefully handling everything from the sheet that will be used on a gurney during a life-saving surgery to the clean, crisp napkins that put the finishing touch on a wedding table.

“We understand who we are, what we do and why we’re doing it,” says Sara Gunderson, who co-owns Gunderson Uniform & Linen Rental with her brother, Doug Gunderson. “It’s part of how we deliver world-class service.”

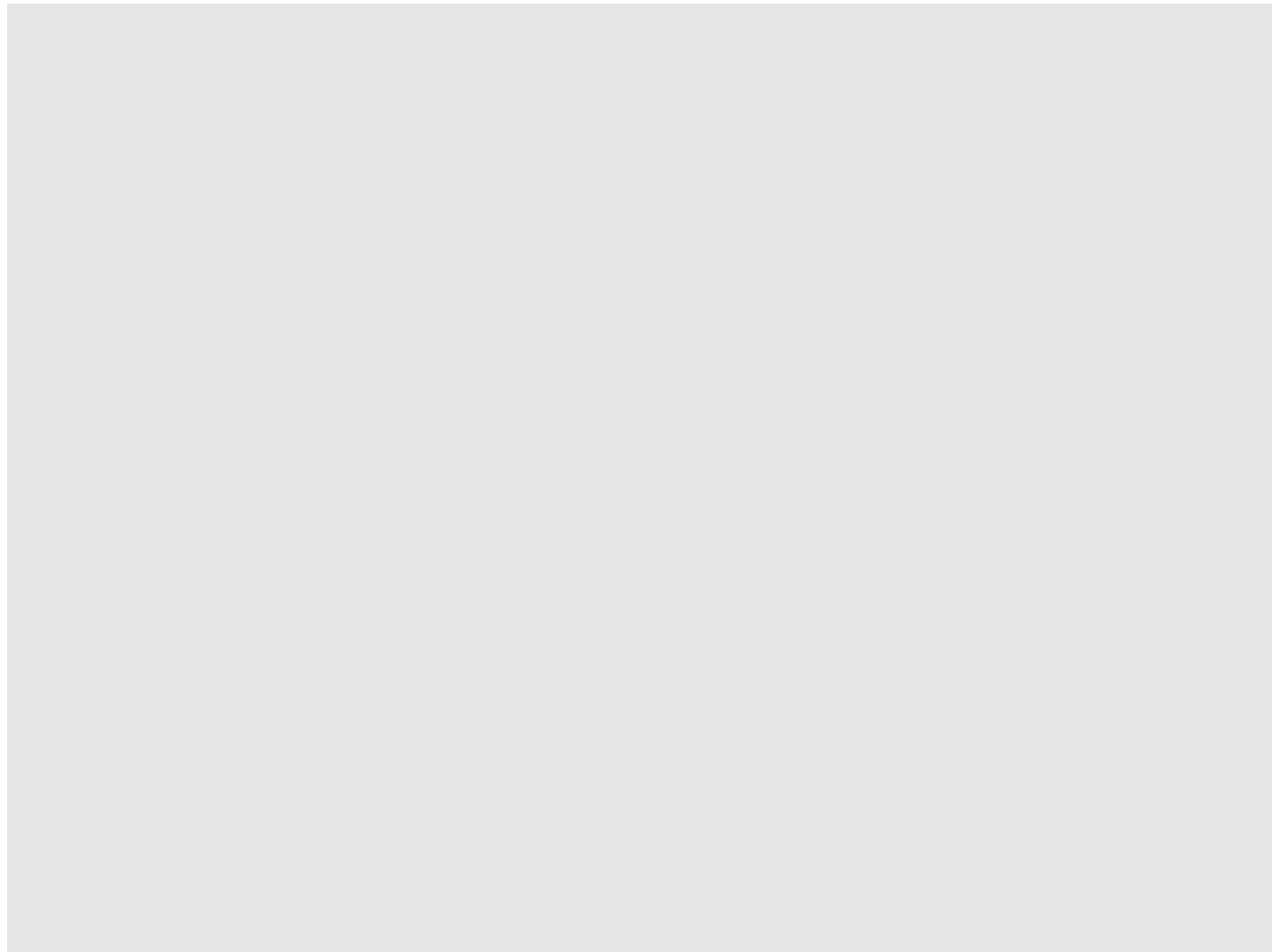
Gunderson’s culture is focused on creating loyal and happy customers, empowering and recognizing its people, delivering outstanding value and service, and building a better community. Those tenets date back to 1952, when Douglas E. Gunderson established a laundry pick-up business with little more than a dream and determination. Thanks to that foundation, as well as advancements made by Douglas’ son Gary when he became owner, the company’s telltale logo with a bright yellow sun is now associated with high quality.

Sara and Doug assumed ownership of the business last year when their father divided ownership of Gunderson Family Companies into the uniform and linen business and the dry cleaning business now owned by the Gundersons’ brother, Greg. Today, Gunderson Uniform & Linen Rental is 150 employees strong and serves clients in the Fox Cities, Milwaukee, Madison, Green Bay, Door County, the Lakeshore and Central Wisconsin.

And while laundry continues to be a core offering, Gunderson’s longevity is a testament to being agile, flexible and open to evolution, Sara Gunderson says, adding: “I definitely give a shoutout to my dad, as it was under his leadership that the company really expanded because of his forward thinking and creativity.”

She says customers keep coming back because of the company’s tradition and differentiators, including Gunderson’s dedicated account managers, radio frequency identification chips that allow for garment tracking, and certified hygienically clean linen through processes set by the uniform and facility services industry professional organization TRSA. The linen is tested by a third party for mold, viruses and bacteria to ensure hygienic cleanliness.

And, of course, there’s the company’s openness to purposeful change.



Co-owners Doug Gunderson and Sara Gunderson say more than 20,000 hospital beds are made up every week with the company's linens.

"Laundry is a commodity, but it's the customer service, integrity and communication that set us apart. We never settle," Sara Gunderson says.

While the company is ecstatic to celebrate 70 years, Sara and Doug are focused on what needs to be done to ensure 70 more. An expansion at one of the company's two Menasha facilities is currently underway, and plans for a new facility are in the works.

"Doug and I have big plans for the future," Sara Gunderson says. "We think more of the community and the state of Wisconsin can use our services. There's a phrase I really like that [says] 'We can't predict the future, but we can create it.' It's within our capability to decide what that future is going to be."