

UNITED WAY

Hundreds of volunteers lend a hand at community projects



Rick Dandes/The Daily Item

Evangelical Community Hospital volunteers Matt Saylor, left, and Desiree Powell plant tomato seeds in a planter outside the Heiter Center.

Day of Action helps Heiter Center, children's museum, more

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LEWISBURG — Volunteers assisted nonprofits on 31 different projects across five Valley counties on Friday, United Way's annual

Day of Action.

Some of the 262 volunteers were individuals, others were teams from organizations and businesses such as Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit, Evangelical Community Hospital,

Fulton Bank, McCann School of Business and many more, said Danielle Velkoff, Greater Susquehanna Valley United Way director of marketing and communications.

Two groups from Evangelical helped with outside gar-

dening chores at The Donald L. Heiter Community Center in Lewisburg and the Lewisburg Children's Museum.

Evangelical CEO Kendra Aucker joined a group of

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gardeners outside Lewisburg's Children's Museum, and Evangelical vice president of clinical operations, Angi Lahr, and her group were preparing to plant tomatoes, peppers and zucchini seedlings in planters outside of the Heiter Center.

Teams and individuals do not choose where they go. They submit individual names and then United Way assigns them to different nonprofits, Aucker said.

Aucker raked leaves as others on her team prepared the garden outside the Museum's front door.

"This is a great opportunity for us to give back to the community that has been so supportive of us over the years," Aucker said.

"This Heiter Center does so many good things in this community," Lahr said. "The idea that we can help do some things they don't have time for is great."

There are so many layers to this Day of Action, Velkoff said. "It introduces folks to the various nonprofits in the region. We hope it leads to an ongoing relationship so that these volunteers aren't there for just the Day of Action, when they see the needs and how



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Dawn Raynen, left, of Northumberland Borough, and Kyle Snyder wash down seats at the YMCA at the Miller Center on Friday.

rewarding it is to help these nonprofits."

The United Way also gets feedback from the participating groups and workplaces that this day can create engaging team-building.

"We hear a lot that this day is

a great experience," Velkoff said.

Greater Susquehanna Valley YMCA CEO Bonnie McDowell said her team was helping clean up 162 seats used by the YMCA at the Miller Center for educational programs.

"It's a wonderful feeling to

know that United Way supports their partner agencies in this way. They see that we need help," McDowell said. "We don't have time with our manpower to get work like this done. These are the things that need to get done, but they fall to the bottom of the list."