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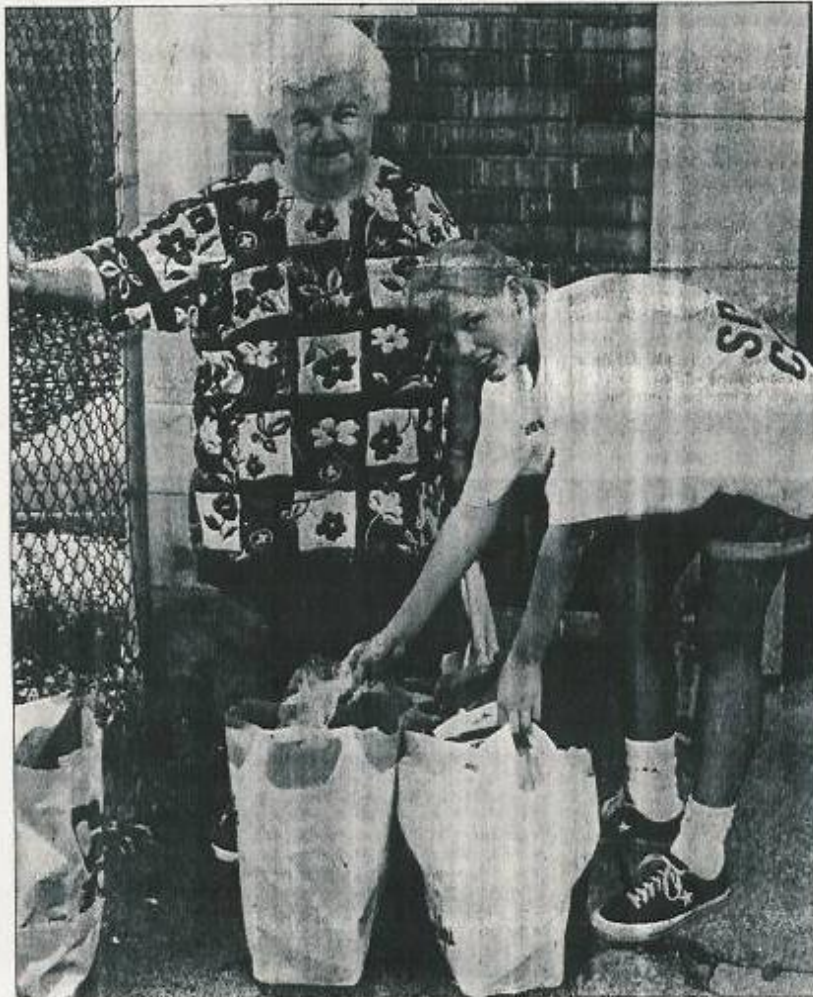
Pastor Paul's offers new outlook

By KEVIN OLSON
 Staff Writer

MINNEAPOLIS — Stillwater is just 15-20 miles from the heart of the Twin Cities. But despite its close proximity, the St. Croix Valley is far removed from many of the problems the inner city experiences: crime, gang violence and poverty. We don't worry about where our next meal is coming from or where we're going to sleep tonight.

Other than what we see on the evening news, most of us suburbanites are oblivious to these problems. Out of sight, out of mind. And that's one of the reasons I accompanied a half dozen youth from my church in Hudson, Wis., to Pastor Paul's Mission in north Minneapolis on Tuesday to volunteer and, ultimately, gain a different perspective on life in an urban environment.

An average of 150 people come each day to Pastor Paul's Mission, a renovated synagogue built in 1926 at 1000 Oliver Ave. N. in Minneapolis. They leave with 145 pounds of food to fill their cupboards. About 7,000 families, seniors and disabled individuals are registered with the non-profit, non-sectarian organization to receive free food. In addition, the mission serves more than 10 million pounds of fruits, vegetables and bread each



Church youth volunteer Jackie Krogman of Hudson, Wis., assists a senior with her groceries Tuesday at Pastor Paul's Mission in North Minneapolis. In the past 20 years, the mission has grown into the largest bag giveaway in the United States. (Evening Gazette photo by Kevin Olson)