Friendly Idahoan caught as fugitive

Bad past catches up with 'good neighbor'

By NANCY REID
The Idaho Statesman

Last summer, Jim Forsgren shared a cached blackberries with his elderly Boise neighbors on Idaho Street.

"He walked the side of a mountain ... and then he gave half of them away to his neighbors," Forsgren's landlord, Jim Roes, said.

But in Pennsylvania, people are

of a different mind about Forsgren. Lavonne Rimer spent at least 20 years gathering petitions and writing politicians to keep the same man behind bars for the murder of her daughter. Jim Forsgren, generous neighbor, basketball referee, musician — also is Jon E. Yount, fugitive, professor and convicted murderer of his 18-year-old math student, Pamela Sue Rimer.

Yount, 50, was arrested Wednesday in Coeur d'Alene after being accused of escaping from a Pennsylvania prison and living on the lam for two years with girlfriend Diana Brodbeck, 45. Yount and Brodbeck were charged with criminal conspiracy, escape, hindering apprehension or prosecution, and aiding in the consummation of a crime. They also face a federal charge of unlawful flight to avoid prosecution.

It was the culmination of a long investigation into his escape, which was aided by a tip from a Boise viewer who noticed NBC's "Unsolved Mysteries" program.

Authorities suspect Brodbeck of helping Yount escape on April 3, 1988, picking him up in her car. She left behind her husband and three children, without notice.

Brodbeck, 45, first met Yount in prison. She belonged to a church group that visited the prisoners at the Rockview State Prison in Pennsylvania. She fell in love and exchanged long letters, officials said. He was a model prisoner who was allowed to work on the supervised security farm detail, despite his conviction for the 1986 murder.

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Gorane Eguren, 14, at Yount's former home on West Idaho Street. Eguren lives next door with grandparents.

"He was a good person for the neighborhood. Never had any better."

— Luis Jaya

Brenda Windell, minister of the Unity Church that Brodbeck regularly attended, probably knew Kathy Kermen as well as anyone.

"I sensed that she was frustrated because of her situation," Windell said, although "Kathy was devoted to Jim."

Yount was the dominant personality in the relationship, said Windell, who described him as handsome and charismatic.

"She didn't have a whole lot of strength inside of her," Windell said. "She seemed to be in the grip of something ready to burst."