



A Circular for the McCroskey Township

April 19th, 2026 (Lexington)

Issue #24

For Terry

They thought he would die before the 15 years was up, but he didn't . . . He outlived the contract, so they had to take it.

Terry Doupe, *Washington State Magazine*, Fall 2006

What Doupe [pronounced: *dew-pay*], then President of the Friends of McCroskey Park, was referring to was the conditions imposed by the State of Idaho before it would accept the 5,000 plus acres from Virgil McCroskey. His detractors required that he maintain the park out of his own pocket for 15 years before it would become a state park.

McCroskey died just a few weeks short of his 94th birthday, in September 1970, 15 years and three months later - just long enough to close the deal. He managed to expand, improve, and maintain the park well into his 90s.

Terry Doupe chuckled at the irony from a quiet admiration of the man. He got to see first-hand the life-long work of a true philanthropist, and was inspired by it to dedicate his own life to the service of the park and to Benewah County.

When Terry ran for county commissioner in 2004, he asked me if he could put up a campaign sign on my property along DeSmet Road. I said, "Sure, go ahead." I felt honored that he made me a part of his campaign.

He was probably the last electable Democrat in Benewah County. When I heard complaints that I was supporting a Democrat, I retorted that local races shouldn't be partisan. You should vote for the man.

I knew his unassuming disposition belied the true giant that he was. He touched many lives in thousands of small but meaningful ways and left a surprisingly enduring legacy. There must have been a thousand mourners at his funeral.

Old-timers will remember him for his days as a logger or for the CrossKeys Restaurant in Tensed; others for his career as a shop teacher in St. Maries - a time in life when boys look upon such men as a second father. After serving in a litany of community causes too numerous to mention here, he ended his shortened days as our county commissioner.

He was in it for the long-haul. When he was elected, he told me he would just listen to the other commissioners at first and not be too quick to express his opinions. Of course, that was his gentle way of telling me that I had been too eager to express my own in previous community controversies.

Unfortunately for all of us, his health gave out before he could make good on that strategy. He died in 2009 at the age of 70 with much more to give.

I'm sure that son-in-law Kim Schwanz and daughter Julie will agree . . . We miss him.

When Zoning Makes Sense

If I can look out my window and see the inside of yours, that is probably when zoning is a good idea.

It grows from **the rule of proximity**. When people get too close, there is a risk that rubbing elbows will become something more serious.

One of the benefits that devolves from planning, zoning, inspections and permits is that you have got the city on your side. If your neighbor thinks you have suddenly become a nuisance, a judge will be on your side, too. As long as you went through the process of getting the city's endorsement, it becomes a different way of protecting your property rights. It discourages endless litigation.

But that is for city folks.

The reason why country folks live in the country is to get away from all of that.

Terry Doupe served on the county zoning board, but he could tell the difference between what goes on in town and what goes on in the country. In the country, we leave each other alone, unless someone is in trouble. Neighbors who may not have talked to each other for years will not forget that they are still neighbors and lend a helping hand when there is a need.

We avoid suing each other, too. We talk things out and compromise if we have to to get along. That is **the rule of reciprocity**.

We don't want the county pretending it has the municipal power. Maybe urban counties need it, but it is counter-productive for rural counties.

Think about it.

The McCroskey Agrarian

1435 Desmet Rd.
Desmet, ID 83824



Celebrating America's Sesquicentennial

Don't forget, this year is America's sesquicentennial. 250 years ago, the Declaration of Independence was signed. It's time to revisit America's heritage and identify the principles that made us unique in the world of nations.

April 19th has been dubbed "Militia Day" in remembrance of the "Shot Heard Around the World" at Lexington and Concord. Since the word "militia" has acquired bad press, I will just call it "Lexington and Concord Day."

But don't forget that those first battles were fought because the British troops were out to disarm our colonial ancestors. Should that give us any clues?

Is it Too Little, Too Late?

At the last county commissioners meeting the county attorney promised to publish the water adjudication contract to the county's website. So far, I don't see it, but I will keep looking.

What good is a citizen's review of the contractual terms if the people do not have the right to rescind it?

But actually, we do have the right through a local referendum. I say, "Let the voters decide."

Stay tuned.

The McCroskey Agrarian (©copyright, 2026) is a newsletter for the McCroskey Territorial Agrarian Society. It is published monthly and after a two-week delay, it is archived at the savebenewahcounty.com website.

James Stivers, Editor/Publisher jwstivers1@gmail.com. Let us know if your postal carrier failed to deliver your copy.



*Postal Customer
Rural Route
Desmet, ID 83824*

