

# Letter: Lack of memory hurting South Lake Tahoe

To the community,

In his book "Lasso the Wind" Timothy Egan wrote, "There is no institutional memory in the West, only dawn." That statement fits the city of South Lake like a glove, a perfect fit.

That's true when one considers the City Council lifers, Hal Cole and Tom Davis. Had they remembered the troubles with redevelopment, the scandal of the \$7 million that was quietly lifted from the city's general fund for redevelopment, and the failure of the city's parking garage, and the bankruptcies, Cole and Davis should never have blessed the Chateau's promises of a grand tomorrow. But they thought only of the dawn. And dawn arrived with more failure and sorrow.



Bill Crawford

Instead of memory guiding city government, we have administrators and council members puffed up with imagination. But when imagination isn't tempered with prudence, too many city attempts to create a new dawn are a gambler's hope, a roll of the dice, betting with other people's money.

And an important item to remember is that city government is a representative institution, government by consent that means city councils should be good listeners. But when council hears citizens contrary, council turns off its hearing aid. Thus, a

lack of trust creeps in.

And a troubling fact is in the last 12 years the City Council has hired four city managers. Two of the hires were from out of state. The same two resigned only after serving about two years of their contract. So it's difficult to think that that office has an institutional memory. If there is a memory, it's short. Also, city managers bring their baggage of what to do. Ideas that do not fit the history and experience of the city. They bring a "new dawn" i.e. SnowGlobe and parking meters to name a couple. The Greeks believed that without memory we live in hell.

**Bill Crawford, South Lake Tahoe**