

Sauttering About Hollywood

By Emily Goodin

Consultant **Chris Sautter** has a new gig — filmmaker. He's recently produced "The King of Steeltown," a documentary about the Democratic 1999 mayoral primary in East Chicago, Ind. Sautter said he got his inspiration from being a Midwest native and working on campaigns in the area. "I'm a consultant. I've worked in the area and I always thought this would be a fascinating subject," Sautter said.

"It's really a throw back to the era of the first Mayor Daley in Chicago. Chicago has always been notorious in the Midwest for its hardball politics," Sautter said. "The King — the guy that is mayor — is **Robert Pastrick** and he's been mayor for three decades. And he was being challenged by his longtime rival **Stephen Stiglich**, who had become the Lake County Chair a few years before, succeeding Pastrick, who had held it for 25 years."

Sautter describes the film as a look at "a political culture that is vanishing from the scene and I thought this would be a good way to preserve that. And also provide a little entertainment. It's offbeat and humorous. You know, one thing that I've observed in my years as a consultant is that as consultants increasingly take over campaigns, we're losing some of the old time characters that used to dominate political campaigns for years and years."

Sautter's name is familiar among Democratic faithful as one of **Al Gore's** point men on the Florida recount.

"In some ways I wish I'd had a camera crew there," Sautter said. "The King of Steeltown" premiered at New York's Independent Film Festival, and a positive review in *LA Weekly* brought some Hollywood attention to the piece. So much attention, in fact, Sautter now hopes to make a film — not a documentary — on former Chicago Mayor **Richard Daley**. "That's sort of a logical next step," he said. He's got a script draft and is hoping to get it into development. "The positive reaction I got out of 'The King of Steeltown' down in L.A. sort of encouraged me to bring out this idea I had been working on for a while...but we're a long way off on that," Sautter said. And his dream actor to play Daley: "**DeNiro** would probably be great. I don't know if he would have any interest. Certainly someone who projects that way would be great."

But currently Sautter's still helping Dems get elected. He's working on "a couple of small projects" for this fall. And he's also working on former Rep. **Jill Long Thompson's** quest for Indiana's 2nd congressional seat. She first went to Congress in 1989, taking **Dan Quayle's** old seat. Sautter said she's now "in a different district, in a much more favorable district" thanks to redistricting. And he's hoping to arrange a D.C. screening for "The King of Steeltown" soon.