

ROLL CALL POLITICS

SHOP TALK

By Rachel Van Dongen

Inside the Consultant's Studio. Veteran Democratic political consultant **Chris Sautter's** documentary about the 1999 mayoral race in East Chicago, Ind., will get a Washington audience this weekend.

"The King of Steeltown: Hardball Politics in the Heartland" debuted to positive reviews in Los Angeles and has been accepted for the New York International Independent Film and Video Festival in September.

Inside-the-Beltway political junkies will get their own chance to view the 75-minute documentary, which took two years and \$50,000 to complete (most from Sautter's own pockets, but with a little help from his friends). The film was nearly finished, said Sautter, a specialist in election recounts, when he was forced to tend to another real-life political drama — rushing to Florida to spearhead Gore's presidential recount team.

The film will be shown during the first Georgetown Film Festival at 11 a.m. on Sunday at the Festival Theater at 3 Blues Alley.

It documents the race between two Democrats vying to preside over a city that has declined with the health of the steel industry: longtime incumbent Mayor **Bob Pastrick** and his nemesis, **Stephen Stiglich**.

Sautter, who produced and directed the independent film, said he chose East Chicago because of its reputation for down-and-dirty political campaigns.

"Having spent so much time in the Bloody 8th, I have come to appreciate hardball politics, and I had been hearing about East Chicago for some time," he said. "You couldn't script some of the things that were said in this film," he joked.

Sautter doesn't plan to give up his day job for the director's chair anytime soon. But he and his brother, **Craig**, author of "Inside the Wigwam," a history of Chicago presidential elections, already have a draft script for a feature film about the life and times of Chicago Mayor **Richard Daley (D)**.

"We're not quite there yet," Sautter said of his new cinema project.