

Tom Richards, Jr.'s Column--

Author Sees Huge Business in Special TT Calling Cards

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THOMAS RICHARDS, JR.

Should the Tundra Times purchase its own press and establish a fully equipt printing plant? This is one question which the board of directors may be giving serious consideration at this time. I, for one, think that it should and that overwhelming justification is present for that investment.

For example, consider the huge egos which I see among the crop of young and energetic executives formed in the wake of the settlement. It is impossible to meet one of these new business men these days and escape without having a business card pressed into ones palm. TT could tap this new market and show tremendous profits in printing business cards alone.

The demand for this business

might be fueled with timely references on the pages of the Tundra Times. A prudent editor might seed news items with mention of the use of T.T. cards by prominent Alaskans. A story such as this might appear on the front page of one issue:

"State Senate hopeful Harry Berri surmounted a serious crisis last week to win endorsement of the Kotzebue Women's Auxiliary for his senate bid. Berri, who announced his candidacy on March 1, was scheduled to appear before the group last Sunday.

"On Friday, however, he discovered that he had exhausted his supply of Tundra Times business cards, which he credits with assisting him in cornering fifteen major endorsements to date. Friday afternoon, Berri placed an urgent phone call to the Tundra Times emergency desk and submitted a rush order

for five-thousand of the T.T.'s exclusive "senate line" calling cards.

"Printers worked overtime Friday evening to ready the distinctive cards, and on Saturday morning, Times' staffers hand carried the Berri cards to the airport for a direct flight to Kotzebue.

"Berri was received enthusiastically by the Kotzebue women's club and, after speaking there, placed another call to the Tundra Times office to order a fresh supply of T.T. cards for his campaign in the Barrow area."

Or, one might read an item such as this:

"Regional corporation executive Steve Stevens celebrated a reunion in Portland Thursday with his only brother after a twenty-year separation.

"Stevens, who was attending a business conference in Oregon, said he would have never recognized his brother, John, had John not noticed the wording on on Steve's business cards, which were specially ordered from the Tundra Times.

"The brothers lost track of each other when John remained in Oregon after completing his education in 1953. John said Steve looked familiar, but that he wasn't certain of their relationship until he read the notation at the bottom of Steve's T.T. business card.

"It read, 'Born in Alaska where the Tanana meets the Yukon'.

"Steve Stevens related the story of this unusual meeting when he and several colleagues stopped into the Tundra Times office to reorder from a line of executive calling cards."

Because of the demand for these business cards, the Tundra Times might expect to experience a period of unprecedented growth. In the unlikely event that the card business alone might be insufficient to produce a healthy profit for the Tundra Times' printing shop, the paper would probably find a vast publishing market if it were to offer special rates for publication of autobiographies of Native leaders.