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Election '08

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ELECTION 2008 | KEEPSAKES

Historic front pages are hot on eBay

Post-Election Day newspapers became a hot commodity Thursday on eBay -- with at least one optimistic seller asking \$1,200 for a copy of The Washington Post.

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BY KIRSTIN MAGUIRE AND JENNIFER LEBOVICH
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The price of Wednesday's Miami Herald: 35 cents -- if you could find a copy.

A day later, for the same paper: \$36 on eBay.

Post-election-day newspapers proclaiming Barack Obama as the next president sold out across the country Wednesday, launching frenzied searches at newsstands and grocery stores, and leading those with extra copies to online auction sites like eBay.

Thousands of eBay sellers Thursday continued to auction off copies of Nov. 5 newspapers from around the country.

One Chicago Sun-Times seller wrote: "This is a once in a life time opportunity to own one of the most important printed pieces in American history."

Others encouraged buyers to take part in a "once in a lifetime event."

Obama's hometown papers -- The Chicago Sun-Times and Chicago Tribune -- were posted on the site with single copies going for about \$50.

Some buyers hoped to rake in even more. One wanted \$1,000 for a bundle of 440 Chicago Tribune.

Closer to home, sellers asked \$24.99 for copies of the Sun Sentinel. Bids for The Palm Beach Post hovered around \$1, a mere twice its newsstand price.

Single copies of The New York Times sold for about \$120, and The Washington Post brought in about \$50. Still, many hopeful sellers listed the minimum price of a single copy at hundreds of dollars.

Even smaller newspapers, like the Kenosha News in Wisconsin, had list prices of \$50 Thursday.

One person listed a single issue of The Washington Post for \$1,200, writing that the newspaper "is a collector's item that no true collector should be without."

Some sellers wrote in their auction posts that the money would go toward tuition bills and newspaper subscriptions.

Many newspapers fired up their presses and printed extra copies Wednesday to keep up with demand. The Herald was one of them. In addition to printing thousands of extra copies on election night, on Wednesday it printed an additional 14,000 for distribution at supermarkets and convenience stores.

Whether the individual sellers will see the returns they hope for remains to be seen, but experts say a historic moment like the election of the first black president is one that prompts widespread interest -- whether for sentimental reasons or for a hope of financial return.

"There was a sense among viewers of the election results that we were watching history being made.

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The results brought tears to many eyes," Michal Ann Strahilevitz, a marketing professor at Golden Gate University in San Francisco, told The Miami Herald. ``That kind of emotion can make people dig in their pocketbooks. They want to show they were there when it happened. There's a sense of wanting to cling to this amazing moment."



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