**Paying the Price**

**$40 million: The amount that President Bush, Sen. John Kerry and their political parties are spending on TV ads in the final week of the presidential campaign. By November 2, the candidates and their parties will have spent more than $400 million on TV and radio ads since the air wars started in March. Independent liberal and conservative groups will have spent at least $100 million. *(Rocky Mountain News, October 25, 2004)***

**According to George Jacoby, an infectious-disease specialist at the Lahey Clinic in Burlington, Massachusetts, it costs about $300 million to develop a new antibiotic. Yet resistant bacteria are gobbling through antibiotics as if they were penny candy, and pharmacologists are becoming desperate for new drug strategies. *(Mark Caldwell, in Discover magazine)***

**For anything worth having one must pay the price; and the price is always work, patience, love, self-sacrifice – no paper currency, no promises to pay, but the gold of real service. *(John Burroughs)*In 1978, the nations of the world spent $800,000 a minute on arms, or an   
annual total of $400 billion. At the current rate of increase, the figure of   
$1 trillion per year will be topped by the end of the century. *(Isaac Asimov’s Book of Facts, p. 258)*  
The cost of manufacturing the first atomic bomb was two billion dollars.  
*(E. C. McKenzie, in Tantalizing Facts, p. 44)***

**The price one pays for pursuing any profession, or calling, is an intimate knowledge of its ugly side. *(James Baldwin, American author)***

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**A California collector last week paid $2.35 million for a single baseball card – a 1909 card featuring shortstop Honus Wagner. In mint condition, it has been called “the Holy Grail of baseball cards.” *(Associated Press, as it appeared in The Week magazine, March 16, 2007)***

**A 1914 baseball card depicting a 19-year-old Babe Ruth, then a pitcher with the Baltimore Orioles, has been valued at a record $6 million. The owner, Collectable, a fractional investing platform, will sell 1 percent of the card in 20,000 shares worth $3 each. *(Axios.com, as it appeared in The Week magazine, June 18, 2021)***

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**The original lyrics to the Beatles’ “A Day in the Life,” handwritten by John Lennon, sold at a Sotherby’s auction for $1.2 million. This beats the previous record for a Beatles lyric sheet, “All You Need Is Love,” which five years ago sold for $1 million *(CNN.com, as it appeared in The Week magazine, July 2-0, 2010)***

**A single, 613-pound bluefin tuna sold for a record $3.1 million in an auction at Tokyo's fish market, bought by the owner of a sushi restaurant chain. The appetite for sushi has reduced the population of the Pacific bluefin to 3.5 percent of its historic size. *(The Washington Post, as it appeared in The Week magazine, January 18, 2019)***

**The most expensive book ever sold at auction was da Vinci’s The Codex Leicester – his observations and illustrations on natural phenomena; the book was sold on November 11, 1994, to software magnate Bill Gates for $30.8 million. *(Harry Bright & Harlan Briscoe, in So, Now You Know, p. 109)***

**Coming home from school, my 11-year-old asked for $6 to go bowling with his class. "Six dollars!" I said. "To go bowling?" "Yes," he replied." "That includes shipping and handling us." (*Patricia Natalie, in Reader's Digest)***

**Yesteryear’s infamous Brinks robbers got $2.7 million in cash. To find   
them, the FBI spent $25 million. To memorialize them in a movie, the cost was $18 million. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**An anonymous bidder paid a record $19 million for a private steak lunch with investor Warren Buffett. The bidding started at $25,000 for the last year of Buffett’s annual “power lunch,” which has raised over $53 million for charity. The previous winner, cryptocurrency entrepreneur, Justin Sun, paid $4.5 million. *(CNN.com, as it appeared in The Week magazine, July 1, 2022)***

**A stainless-steel, 3-foot-tall bunny sculpture by Jeff Koons sold for $91.1 million, an auction record for a living artist. The buyer was art dealer Robert Mnuchin -- father of Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin -- who bid on behalf of his client, hedge-fund billionaire Steve Cohen. *(Artnet.com, as it appeared in The Week magazine, May 31/June 7, 2019)***

**The cost of turning out the average business letter is still going up. Now   
it’s $8.10. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**How much does it cost to change a U.S. government light bulb? If you’re a federal contractor working at Oak Ridge National Laboratory in Tennessee, it’s $136 for the 90 minutes of work. *(Scripps Howard New Service, 1993)*  
The price of hating other human beings is loving oneself less. *(Eldridge Cleaver)***

**The most valuable coin in the world sits in the lobby of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York in lower Manhattan. It’s Exhibit 18E, secured in a bulletproof glass case with an alarm system and an armed guard nearby. The 1933 Double Eagle, considered one of the rarest and most beautiful coins in America, has a face value of $20 – and a market value of $7.6 million. It was among the last batch of gold coins ever minted by the U.S. government. The coins were never issued; most of the nearly 500,000 cast were melted down to bullion in 1937. *(Susan Berfield, in Bloomberg Businessweek magazine)***

**The caravels of Christopher Columbus’s small fleet voyaged to the frightening frontier of the New World, then returned home, bearing cargoes of discovery. The pioneering triumph of Columbus did not come without cost. He set sail with three vessels, the Nina, Pinta and Santa Maria. Only two returned. *(Malcolm McConnell)***

**Superman has saved the day again, this time in real life. An unidentified family facing foreclosure on their home was going through some old boxes when a family member came across a copy of Action Comics No. 1 – considered the holy grail of comics because it marked Superman’s first appearance. The comic book is expected to fetch about $250,000 at auction. Auctioneers reportedly spoke with the bank, which has agreed to allow the family to remain in their home until they receive the money from the auction to catch up on their house payments. *(The Week magazine, August 20, 2010)***

**With a month remaining until the Super Bowl, CBS has already sold all but four 30-second commercial spots during the Feb. 7 game. CBS is charging $2.5 million to $3 million per spot, about the same rate as last year. *(Los Angeles Times, as it appeared in The Week magazine, January 15, 2010)***

**An Austin, Texas, man paid $1350 for a cornflake on eBay – but not just any cornflake. This one is shaped like Illinois, home of the new President-elect. “I’m starting a collection of Americana items,” said Monty Kerr, who wants to add it to a traveling museum. “This one is fantastic.” Kerr said he would send someone to pick up the flake by hand, so it won’t be damaged. *(Parade magazine, December 28, 2008)***

**10 CENTS BRINGS FORTUNE: A dime struck in 1894 at the San Francisco mint was auctioned in Baltimore, Maryland, Monday for $1,322,500, the most ever paid for a United States dime, experts said. The coin, described as being in nearly pristine condition, was one of only 24 dimes made that year at the San Francisco mint, whose director had requested them as gifts for visiting bankers. Just 10 of the dimes are believed to remain. *(Associated Press, as it appeared in the Rocky Mountain News, March 9, 2005)***

**Welcome to Disney. Enjoy the lines: It might sound nuts that Disney is charging $75 for visitors to wander around its California theme park even though the rides are still closed, said Mary McNamara in the Los Angeles Times. But "I'm here to tell you it's not." About a year after the pandemic forced the shutdown of Disney's California Adventure, there are thousands "desperate for even the faintest tang of the Disney experience." On my recent visit to the park-adjacent Downtown Disney and Buena Vista Street shopping and dining areas, "it was a 45-minute wait," just to enter. All to experience the aspects of Disney we used to "complain about the most: long lines, overpriced food, and the siren call of too much Disney merch." But, I'll admit, after a "yearlong lifetime of home-office work," even the piped-in music sounded like "the singing of a heavenly host." *(The Week magazine, March 12, 2021)***

**The highest publicly reported amount of money paid for a domain name is $7.5 million in stock options, to buy business.com. *(Noel Botham, in The Best Book of Useless Information Ever, p. 56)***

**Some famous expeditions that weren’t big winners: Vasco da Gama -- Four ships to India, two lost; Erik the Red -- Twenty-five ships to Greenland, 14 arrived; Cabot -- Four ships to Newfoundland, all lost; Columbus -- Santa Maria sank, first voyage; Magellan -- One of five ships, 18 of 237 men circle globe. Magellan was one of the 219 men who died. *(World Features Syndicate)***

**For anything worth having one must pay the price; and the price is always work, patience, love, self-sacrifice – no paper currency, no promises to pay, but the gold of real service. *(John Burroughs)***

**Every gold metal captured in the Olympics typically costs a country $37 million in training costs, according to a University of South Australia study. That could explain why the lion’s share of the medals in the Beijing Games was won by the 10 nations with the biggest economies, including the U.S., China, and Russia. *(MSNBC.com, as it appeared in The Week magazine, September 5, 2008)***

**Country club record keepers say the upkeep of just one golf hole costs an average of about $25,000 a year. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**Success doesn’t come cheap. If selected to receive a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, the honored celebrity must pony up $15,000 for the privilege. The fee is usually paid by a sponsor – such as a movie studio, television network, or record company -- that stands to benefit from the resulting media attention. (David Hoffman, in Little-Known Facts about Well-Known Stuff, p. 166)**

**“Sex.com” has set the record for the most expensive internet address ever. An adult entertainment company recently paid $12 million to the previous owner for the right to use that domain name. *(USA Today, as it appeared in The Week magazine, April 28, 2006)***

It cost $4,000 per inch to build an interstate highway project on the   
fringe of New York City in the late 1970’s -- over $250 million per mile. *(Isaac Asimov’s Book of Facts, p. 63)*

Billionaire Larry Ellison is now the proud owner of Hawaii’s sixth-largest island. The Oracle CEO paid about $500 million for 98 percent of Lanai – which is 140 square miles in area, or about three times the size of the city of San Francisco. *(USA Today, as it appeared in The Week magazine, July 6-13, 2012)*

The most expensive jewel ever sold at auction was a 24.78-carat pink diamond that went for a record $46,158,674 through Sotheby’s in 2010. *(Don Voorhees, in The Super Book of Useless Information, p. 231)*

PRICE TAG OF JUSTICE: $2.5 million. The cost to investigate, arrest and prosecute Scott Peterson in California for the murder of his pregnant wife, Laci. *(Associated Press, as it appeared in Rocky Mountain News, November 19, 2004)*

On December 15, 2001, Italy’s Leaning Tower of Pisa reopened after a team of experts spent 11 years and $27 million to fortify the tower without eliminating its famous lean. Engineers were able to reduce the lean by between 16 and 17 inches. *(MOMENTS IN TIME – The History Channel)*

**$4.15 million: The price paid for a rare 1913 Liberty Head nickel. Legend Numismatics, a coin dealership in Lincroft, New Jersey, bought it from collector Ed Lee of Merrimack, New Hampshire. 5: The number of such nickels known to exist. *(Associated Press, as it appeared in Rocky Mountain News, June 3, 2005)***

Life may be the price we have to pay for all that lovely time in eternity. *(Ashleigh Brilliant, in Pot-Shots)*

For sheer oddity, it’s hard to beat the $67,000 paid for a single litchi at a Beijing auction in 2002. It came from a 400-year-old litchi tree whose fruit was once enjoyed by emperors of the Qing dynasty. The pricey produce broke the record price of $6,645 paid for a single litchi, which came from the same tree and earned it a spot in the book of Guinness World Records 2001. Now that’s nutty. *(Ben Franklin’s Almanac, p. 18)*

**Cryptocurrency pioneer Justin Sun paid $4.57 million at a charity auction to have lunch with Warren Buffett, who once referred to Bitcoin as "rat poison squared." The lunch is typically held at Smith & Wollensky steak house in New York City. *(Bloomberg.com, as it appeared in The Week magazine, June 14, 2019)***

A bottle of 60-year-old Macallan Valerio Adami 1926 single malt whiskey sold for a record $1.1 million at a Scottish auction last week. A former Macallan distiller described the vintage as "quite intense," with a taste of "dried fruit" and some hints of "warming spice." *(The New York Times, as it appeared in The Week nagazine, October 19, 2018)*

A handwritten manuscript of one of Ludwig van Beethoven’s compositions has been discovered in a dusty filing cabinet at the Palmer Theological Seminary in Philadelphia. Now the school stands to make an estimated $2.6 million by selling the 80-page document, which Beethoven scribbled a few months before he died. The piece, a four-hand piano arrangement of his “Grosse Fuge” in B flat major, was clearly a work in progress, with annotations in pencil and red crayon in the margins. Just a few months ago, a fire damaged many items in the library’s archives, but the manuscript was unscathed by fire, smoke, or water. “There is no doubt that it was a providential act,” said seminary president Wallace Smith. *(The Week magazine, October 28, 2005)*

**A ship-shaped Titanic museum opened in March in Branson, Missouri, and includes 400 artifacts from the 1912 shipwreck, including a menu worth $100,000. Boarding visitors are given the identity of an actual passenger during tours of the unusual interactive museum. *(American Profile magazine, July 2, 2006)***

**Amazon agreed to buy the MGM film studio, with its storied film library, for $8.45 billion. The deal marks Amazon's second-biggest acquisition, after the $13.7 billion purchase of Whole Foods. *(Reuters, as it appeared in The Week magazine, June 4, 2021)***

**A bidder in Kuwait has paid $750,000 to reserve the eight-digit mobile phone number 5555-5555. “Vanity” mobile numbers are a popular form of conspicuous consumption among the wealthy in the Middle East. In 2006, a bidder at an auction in Qatar paid $2.7 million to reserve the number 666-6666. *(TheAtlantic.com, as it appeared in The Week magazine, November 5, 2010)***

**The effort to oust California Gov. Gavin Newsom ended in resounding failure this week, after the Democrat prevailed in a landslide. As The Week went to press, with some 70 percent of ballots counted, an insurmountable 64 percent of voters had said “no” to removing the governor from office. The $276 million recall vote was ordered after only 4 percent of the state’s population signed a petition. *(The Week magazine, September 24, 2021)***

**When William Randolph Hearst was trying to buy a newspaper in New York City he cabled the late James Gordon Bennett, in Paris, owner of the New York Herald: “Please put price on New York Herald.” Bennett replied: “Three cents daily; five cents Sunday.” *(The Wall Street Journal)***

**A 16-acre oceanfront estate in Palm Beach, Florida, being sold by billionaire tech entrepreneur Jim Clark, is listed for $175 million. A sale at that price would shatter the state’s single-family home sale record of $130 million. *(The Wall Street Journal, as it appeared in The Week magazine, July 1, 2022)***

**The cost of a one-way flight from Mumbai to New York via Abu Dhabi in a suite with a living room and private shower is $38,000. For the rest of us, there's premium economy. Fees for seat selection have made that class surge, with bookings in North America rising 78 percent from 2015 to 2017. *(Oz.com, as it appeared in The Week magazine, February 8, 2019)***

**If you've got kids living at home, you probably went shopping for school clothes recently. If you think the bill was a bit high, consider this: Escada, a leading name in women's fashion and a brand favored by many celebrities, recently offered a pair of jeans in its couture ling for $7,500. And they probably weren't even tested to see how they would stand up to the rigors of the schoolyard. *(Samantha Weaver, in Tidbits, September 10, 2007)***

Pecan pie is dandy. But to walk off just one piece of it, diet experts say, you have to walk for two hours. (L. M. Boyd)

**Good week for: Inflation, after an exceedingly rare 1943 penny, mistakenly struck in bronze, was sold for $1.7 million by a dealer in New Jersey to an anonymous buyer. The dealer called it “the world’s most valuable penny.” (The Week magazine, October 8, 2010)**

**$1,752: Total paid last week to buy and cover the back taxes on an inch-square plot of land in Indiana, deeded by the previous owner to ensure access to a lake. $5: Approximate annual property tax on the stamp-size parcel. *(Time magazine, December 19, 2005)***

**A PRETTY PRICE: $20 million paid at auction in Beijing by a Chinese entrepreneur for a porcelain vase, a record for antiquities in China. The vase was made during the 960-1279 Song dynasty. *(Rocky Mountain News, April 20, 2006)***

**Film studios typically pay $1,000 to $15,000 a day to use private homes for movie productions. The company making Reese Witherspoon’s Just Like Heaven agreed to pay Matt Leffers of San Francisco $2,500 a day to shoot in his house. “For that much,” he said, “I’ll bring doughnuts every morning and give back rubs to anyone who wants one.” *(Forbes.com, as it appeared in The Week magazine, August 25, 2006)***

Grief is the price we pay for love. *(Queen Elizabeth II)*

**The real price of everything is the toil and trouble of acquiring it. *(Adam Smith)***

**An auction winner paid more than $28 million for an 11-minute ride into space alongside Jeff Bezos. Nearly 7,600 people from 159 countries registered to bid on the July 20 flight aboard the New Shepard -- a rocket developed by Bezos' company, Blue Origin. *(The New York Times, as it appeared in The Week magazine, June 25, 2021)***

**The actors who do the voices on The Simpsons are paid $400,000 per episode. (Don Voorhees, in The Essential Book of Useless Information, p. 13)**

**A 6-foot-wide residence in west London has gone on the market for $1.3 million. The home, which was advertised as "possibly the skinniest house" in the city was once a hat shop but was converted by fashion photographer Juergen Teller. It boasts five floors, two bedrooms, 1,034 square feet of living space, and what the realtor calls the same design as the cabin of "a luxury yacht." (The Week magazine, March 5, 2021)**

**The true cost of soccer moms: Do the math and you’ll find that parenting a soccer player costs $52,064, said Regina Lewis in Daily Finance.com. And that’s nothing compared with the $162,700 it will cost you to be a hockey parent. The site calculated the overall time the average parent commits to a child’s activity in a specific sport from age 8 to 17, using the Bureau of Labor Statistics’ median hourly rate of $16.27. The average hockey parent spends an estimated 1,000 hours every year on sport-related activities, from driving to practices to rooting at away games. The figures don’t cover lessons or “what it takes to raise an Olympian or professional athlete” – just a son or daughter “good enough to make a high school team.” If you’re looking to save a little, steer your kid toward the infield or outfield. The average cost of being a baseball parent is just $42,302. (The Week magazine, July 1-8, 2011)**

**On September 17, 1976, NASA publicly unveiled its first space shuttle, the Enterprise. Development of the aircraft-like spacecraft cost almost $10 billion and took nearly a decade. *(MOMENTS IN TIME – The History Channel)***

**The 1962 comic book Amazing Fantasy No. 15, featuring the first appearance of Spider-Man, sold for a record $3.6 million at auction last week. It’s one of only four copies known to exist in near-mint condition. *(Hollywood Reporter, as it appeared in The Week magazine, September 24, 2021)***

An anonymous bidder paid a record $3.46 million this week to have a steak lunch with legendary investor Warren Buffett, who auctions off a meal for charity each year. Last year’s winning bidder, investment advisor Ted Weschler, was hired by Buffett several months after he paid $2.6 million to dine with the Oracle of Omaha. *(San Francisco Chronicle, as it appeared in The Week magazine, June 22, 2012)*

New York City’s newest subway line cost $100,000 a foot to build -- more than $500 million each mile. *((Isaac Asimov’s Book of Facts, p. 63)*

In an attempt to get a patient’s mind off her upcoming surgery, the doctor was telling her about his daughter’s forthcoming wedding and the financial burden of putting his son through college. As he was about to leave, he said, “See you in surgery tomorrow. Do you have any questions?” “Just one,” said the patient. “Am I paying for the wedding or the tuition?” (*Carl Dugas, in Reader’s Digest)*

The 29.5 million taxpayers who still use pen and paper will get tax packages by regular mail this week, and another 11 million households will get computer filing brochures in hopes they’ll change how they file taxes. The mail-outs cost $15 million for printing and postage. *(Rocky Mountain News, January 6, 2005)*

An unidentified buyer last week paid $30 million to $40 million for a 1936 Bugatti Type 57SC Atlantic, one of only three made by the Italian carmaker. It’s the most expensive used car ever sold. *(USA Today, as it appeared in The Week magazine, May 21, 2010)*

**Pfizer said it expects to sell about $15 billion in coronavirus vaccine doses this year, netting a profit in the high 20 percent range of revenue. The company said it plans to deliver 200 million doses of its coronavirus vaccine to the U.S. by May, earlier than its initial forecast of July. *(CNBC.com, as it appeared in The Week magazine, February 12, 2021)***

Good week for: Having it all, after Clark and Sharon Winslow of Belvedere, California, spent $4.2 million to buy the house next door – and demolished it. The home was partially obstructing their existing, $19 million home’s view of San Francisco Bay. *(The Week magazine, July 6-13, 2012)*

If the White House were put up for sale on the real estate market, it would fetch a price of around $1.5 billion, say real estate analysts. Frequent renovations, 13 bedrooms, 35 bathrooms, and an ideal location would justify the colossal asking price – though the frequent resident turnover might put off potential buyers. *(The Wall Street Journal, as it appeared in The Week magazine, November 2, 2012)*

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