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Kennedy is Trump's pick for health post

His extreme views are sure to be scrutinized in confirmation hearing

By Sam Brodey, Emma Platoff, and Adam Piore
GLOBE STAFF

WASHINGTON — In yet another controversial pick for his new Cabinet, President-elect Donald Trump said Thursday that he will nominate Robert F. Kennedy Jr., the prominent vaccine skeptic and conspiracy believer, to be secretary of health and human services.

Trump wrote on social media that Kennedy would help “ensure that everybody will be protected from harmful chemicals, pollutants, pesticides, pharmaceutical products, and food additives that have contributed to the overwhelming Health Crisis in this Country.”

Kennedy, who has staunch critics on the right and left — including most of his own family — is just the latest in a string of surprising Cabinet picks by Trump, all of whom will likely face stiff resistance in the Senate. On Wednesday, Trump said he would nominate former representative Matt Gaetz, a far-right loyalist facing a number of ethics allegations, as attorney general, and former representative Tulsi Gabbard as director of national intelligence.

A onetime scion of America's most famous Democratic political family, Kennedy pursued an independent presidential campaign before dropping out and backing Trump and stumping for him across the country. Trump had long teased that

KENNEDY, Page A9

Trump may look to Constitution to get his nominees

By Jim Puzanghera
GLOBE STAFF

WASHINGTON — Donald Trump pushed the envelope on presidential powers in his first term, but now there are concerns he could go even further in an attempt to install highly controversial nominees like former representative Matt Gaetz as attorney general and Robert F. Kennedy Jr. as health and human services secretary.

The president-elect has publicly said he wants to use so-called recess appointments to bypass Senate confirmation so positions can be “filled immediately.” Other presidents have used that limited constitutional power when faced with delays by the opposing party, but Trump might be considering a twist — circumventing his own party's opposition to some nominees.

Edward Whelan, a conservative legal scholar, said in a Washington Post opinion article Thursday that he's heard that Trump is considering triggering an obscure constitutional provision that would allow him to force a recess over the objections of the incoming Republican Senate majority. The move would permit him to put any nominee in place at will.

“President-elect Donald Trump is threatening to turn the Constitution's appointment process for Cabinet officers on its head,” wrote Whelan, a distinguished senior fellow of the Ethics and Public Policy Center, a conservative Washington, D.C., think tank.

RECESS APPOINTMENTS, Page A9

Local man gets on front page, can't find a newspaper

Onion's CEO (he's a Mass. guy) leads push to grab bankrupt Infowars, a site ripe for parody

By Aidan Ryan
GLOBE STAFF

The Onion's most cutting joke of all time might have come on Thursday, when the satirical news site announced it plans to acquire Infowars, the website run by conspiracy theorist Alex Jones that has spread disinformation on everything from mass shootings to outlandish claims that the government controls the weather.

Behind the deal is the relatively new leader

of the Onion, Ben Collins, a Massachusetts native, former star NBC News reporter, and self-described “Masshole” who said he saw the opportunity to buy Infowars out of bankruptcy as the kind of in-your-face dare that he was born to take.

“My whole family will fight you in a Dunkin' Donuts parking lot,” said Collins, who grew up in Salem and later Byfield, in an interview. “The ‘Massholeness’ informs, probably, this decision to an extent that I don't want to

really think about without a lot more therapy.”

Jokes aside, the planned purchase has a very serious side to it: The deal was backed by families of victims in the mass shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Conn., which Jones repeatedly claimed was a hoax, costing him \$1.5 billion in legal damages. Terms of the purchase were not disclosed.

“The dissolution of Alex Jones' assets and the death of Infowars is the justice we have

THE ONION, Page A3



DAVID L. RYAN/GLOBE STAFF

Noah Nasuti, with Bay Crane, worked to install “The Knowledge Keepers” by Alan Michelson at the MFA on Thursday.

AFTER A CENTURY AT MFA, A DIFFERENT VIEW

New sculptures focus on thriving Native culture of today, not horrors of past

By Murray Whyte
GLOBE STAFF

ROCK TAVERN, N.Y. — On a spotless blue sky afternoon in upstate New York last Friday, a chromium-plated effigy of Julia Marden, a registered member of the Aquinnah Wampanoag tribe, wobbled on a wooden palette as a forklift hoisted it from the shadow of an industrial bay at the UAP Foundry and into the bright sunshine. “Wow,” said Alan Michelson, abundantly pleased at the glint, the shimmer, the fractures of sky bouncing off its shoulders and back. “Whatever I was expecting, this is definitely better.”

The figure's right arm held aloft a fan of long feathers, still dun gray like its head and neck, awaiting the platinum gilding that would lend its mirror glow — a work in progress, with a deadline drawing near.

“The Knowledge Keepers,” Michelson's finished sculptures of Marden and of Nipmuc descendant Andre StrongBearHeart Gaines Jr., both real-life cultural leaders in their Massachusetts communities, was installed Thursday morning to flank the main entrance of the Museum of Fine Arts. Earlier this year, the MFA

MFA, Page A12



DAVID L. RYAN/GLOBE STAFF

“Appeal to the Great Spirit,” by Cyrus Dallin in 1909, was intended as a gesture of sympathy for the Native American population.

Boehner at courthouse amid Steward probe

Former speaker is board member of hospital chain

By Mark Arsenaault, Chris Serres, and Elizabeth Koh
GLOBE STAFF

In a sign that a criminal probe into Steward Health Care has picked up steam, a prominent member of the company's board of directors, former US House speaker John Boehner, appeared at the federal courthouse in Boston Thursday where a grand jury is investigating bribery allegations of fraud, bribery, and corruption within the national health care chain.

Boehner ignored several questions from a Globe Spotlight Team reporter Thursday morning at the John Joseph



JESSICA RINALDI/GLOBE STAFF

John Boehner (center) left federal court in Boston.

Moakley Federal Courthouse. Boehner, who recently received a federal subpoena, was inside the courthouse for two hours.

As a member of Steward's board, Boehner was privy to key financial details about the company as its financial situation cratered and patients' lives were imperiled by staff and medical equipment shortages. The Globe reported last month that several board members had been summoned to answer questions from federal prosecutors as part of the grand jury probe.

Federal law enforcement also has been in talks with several top Steward executives, the

BOEHNER, Page A12

The SJC cleared the way for the airing of the identities of men accused of patronizing a brothel network in Cambridge. **B1.**

The House passed an internal rule change offering Auditor Diana DiZoglio a drastically limited scope of power after voters gave her authority. **B1.**

The pandemic and the chaos that came with it led to an erosion of trust in scientists, a survey found. **A2.**

At least 12 emergency rescue workers were killed in a strike on a civil defense center south of the Lebanese capital. **A4.**

What would it take for the Red Sox to land Juan Soto? Julian McWilliams's analysis. **C1.**



Over the chill

Friday: Warmer, breezy. High 56-61. Low 40-45.

Saturday: More of the same. High 59-64. Low 41-46.

Weather and Comics, G6-7. Obituaries, C11.

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