

Journal of the House

Friday, April 3, 2026

At nine o'clock and thirty minutes in the forenoon, the Speaker called the House to order.

Devotional Exercises

Devotional exercises were conducted by April Ossmann, Poet, White River Junction.

Pages Honored

In appreciation of their many services to the members of the General Assembly, the Speaker recognized the following named Pages who completed their service today and presented them with commemorative pins:

Scarlett Bedford of Sharon
Finch Heilenbach of Charlotte
Madeleine Howard of Montpelier
James Laughlin of Barre City
Ella Morrison of Barre Town
Evelyn Scott of Northfield
Addison Towne of Morristown

Senate Bills Referred

Senate bills of the following titles were severally taken up, read the first time, and referred to committee as follows:

S. 193

Senate bill, entitled

An act relating to establishing a forensic facility for certain criminal justice-involved persons

To the Committee on Judiciary.

S. 198

Senate bill, entitled

An act relating to the regulation of tobacco products and tobacco substitutes

To the Committee on Commerce and Economic Development.

S. 214

Senate bill, entitled

An act relating to the provision of prekindergarten education in geographically isolated school districts

To the Committee on Education.

Bill Referred to Committee on Appropriations**S. 218**

Senate bill, entitled

An act relating to reducing chloride contamination of State waters

Appearing on the Notice Calendar, and pursuant to House Rule 35(a), carrying an appropriation, was referred to the Committee on Appropriations.

Ceremonial Readings**H.C.R. 237**

Offered by All Members of the House

House concurrent resolution congratulating the Vermont-associated 2026 Winter Olympics medal winners

Whereas, the 2026 Milan-Cortina Winter Olympics included a spectacular display of the athletic prowess of 24 Vermont-resident or Vermont-educated competitors, and six of them captured seven of the 33 U.S. medals, confirming the premier role Vermont continues to play in incubating U.S. Olympic skiers, and

Whereas, Ryan Cochran-Siegle of Starksboro, who attended the University of Vermont (UVM), repeated his 2022 silver medal in the alpine super-G, and completed the course merely 0.13 seconds behind the gold medalist, Franjo von Allmen of Switzerland, and he won his 2026 silver medal 54 years to the day that his mother, Barbara Ann Cochran, won the women's slalom gold medal at the 1972 Winter Olympics in Sapporo, Japan, and

Whereas, the world's top-ranked and most-decorated women's cross-country skier and founding member of the prestigious SMS T2 cross-country skiing team Jessie Diggins, competing in her final Olympics, added to her Olympic triumphs (2018–gold–sprint, 2022–silver–freestyle, and 2022–bronze–freestyle sprint) when she captured the bronze in the 10k skate, and

Whereas, second-time Olympian, Stratton Mountain School alumnus, and big air skier Mac Forehand, in an astounding display of skiing bravado and ingenuity, completed the first-ever “2160-degree nose-butter triple cork,”

secured the silver medal in the big air competition, and exercised exemplary sportsmanship, when, by an extremely narrow margin, Norwegian Tormod Frostad was awarded the gold medal, and

Whereas, former Landgrove and now Richmond resident, Stratton Mountain School alum, UVM mechanical engineering graduate, two-time individual NCAA cross-country skiing champion, and member of the prestigious SMS T2 cross-country skiing team Ben Ogden skied in his second Olympics, and his performance in the cross-country sprint classic was breathtaking, as he narrowly finished in second place by one second, at 3:40, to the gold medalist, Norwegian Johannes Høsflot Klæbo, ending the 50-year American hiatus in men's cross-country skiing Olympic medaling, which Vermonter Bill Koch last achieved in 1976, and, as an added thrill, Ben Ogden earned a second silver medal, teaming with Gus Schumacher on the U.S. men's cross-country sprint freestyle team to win the first American medal in this event, and

Whereas, UVM alum and current Waitsfield resident Paula Moltzan was the first Junior World Championships women's slalom gold medalist, was the first UVM Catamount freshman to win the NCAA women's slalom title, and was twice named an NCAA First Team All-American; more recently, she performed superbly in World Cup slalom and giant slalom competitions; and, at the 2026 Winter Olympics, she earned her first Olympic medal, a bronze, skiing the slalom segment of the new women's team combined event, in partnership with her downhill teammate, Jackie Wiles, delighting students at the Green Mountain Valley School with whom she trains at Sugarbush, and

Whereas, Burke Academy alum Mikaela Shiffrin, the most decorated alpine skier in the sport's history and prior Olympian (2014–gold–slalom, 2018–gold–giant slalom, and 2018–silver–women's alpine combined), dominated the slalom to win the gold medal, marking a new milestone in her remarkable career on the slopes, and

Whereas, each of these Vermont-associated medalists magnificently represented our nation at the 2026 Milan-Cortina Winter Olympics, *now therefore be it*

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly congratulates the Vermont-associated 2026 Winter Olympics medal winners, *and be it further*

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to each of the Olympians honored in this resolution.

Having been adopted in concurrence on Friday, March 27, 2026 in accord with Joint Rule 16b, was read.

H.C.R. 238

Offered by All Members of the House

House concurrent resolution congratulating the Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired on a century of advocating for and facilitating the realization of outstanding support services

Whereas, in 1926, Helen Keller, the ardent advocate for individuals with visual impairment, toured Vermont and encouraged the State's governmental leadership to provide public financing for services assisting Vermonters who were blind or visually impaired, and

Whereas, she proved an effective advocate, as her speaking engagement in Burlington sparked considerable interest, and, in May 1926, her efforts resulted in the establishment of the nonprofit organization the Vermont Association for the Blind, now known as the Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired (VABVI), and

Whereas, upon being formed, VABVI partnered with the State to develop a statewide program to facilitate vital support services for impacted individuals, and

Whereas, for the past century, this partnership has improved the lives of countless Vermonters of all ages who are either blind or visually impaired, and

Whereas, in 2026, VABVI is an integral organization in the system of support for the visually impaired, and this work is now especially important as the number of persons in need of these vital services is anticipated to double by the year 2030, *now therefore be it*

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly congratulates the Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired on a century of advocating for and facilitating the realization of outstanding support services, *and be it further*

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to VABVI.

Having been adopted in concurrence on Friday, March 27, 2026 in accord with Joint Rule 16b, was read.

Remarks Journalized

On motion by **Rep. White of Waitsfield**, the following remarks by **Reps. Lipsky of Stowe, Boutin of Barre City, Galfetti of Barre Town, McCoy of Poultney, Krowinski of Burlington, and Marcotte of Coventry** were ordered printed in the Journal:

Rep. Lipsky of Stowe offered the following remarks:

“Madam Speaker:

Today, we are honored to have with us many of Vermont’s most accomplished skiing athletes, coaches, friends, family, and supporters. I would like to recognize our 2026 Winter Olympic medalists:

Double silver medalist, Ben Ogden, originally from Landgrove, UVM graduate, and now residing in Richmond.

Bronze medalist, and sixth place overall in this year’s Women’s World Cup, and UVM graduate, Paul Moltzan, now residing in Waitsfield.

Silver medalist, who also won silver in 2022, Ryan Cochran Sigle, originally from Starksboro, UVM graduate, and now residing in Burlington.

Bronze medalist, Jessie Diggins, who retired two weeks ago and the most decorated cross-country skier, in U.S. history, could not be with us today, but sent the following note:

‘Dear Representative Lipsky,

Over the past 14 years, my SMST2 teammates and I have found inspiration in the hills and mountains of Vermont, as we prepared for international cross country skiing success.

Vermont is a special place with a deep winter sports legacy, and it is a tremendous honor to be recognized along with Ben, Mac, Mikaela, Paula, Ryan, and our many other Vermont-based winter Olympians. Thank you to both Governor Phil Scott, and all of the legislators from across the State.

While we are often recognized for our individual successes, I feel certain that my fellow Olympians and teammates agree that these successes are the product of a great team environment. To that end, along with competing, we work equally hard to build community and inspire the next generation.

With appreciation,

Jessie Diggins’

Also, in attendance today, are:

2026 Olympian Julia Kern of Richmond, who finished sixth in the individual cross-country sprint;

1972 Olympic Slalom Gold Medalist, Barbara Ann Cockran of Starksboro.

1976 Olympic cross-country silver medalist and American’s first overall World Cup winner in 1982, Bill Koch, originally from Guilford, and now residing in Peru.

And Trina Hosmer, UVM graduate and 1972 Olympian and member of the first ever U.S. Women's Olympic cross-country ski team. At the World Masters Cross-Country Championships in Italy this past February. Trina won four gold medals to add to more than thirty medals she had previously won at prior World Masters Championships. Trina resides in Stowe.

Finally, joining those I've just introduced are many former Vermont-based U.S. Ski Team members, the University of Vermont Catamount Ski Team, Stratton Mountain School, SMST2, Mount Mansfield Academy, Burke Mountain Academy, and Green Mountain Valley School's friends, family, and supporters.

Please welcome our guests."

Rep. Boutin of Barre City offered the following remarks:

"Madam Speaker:

Two years ago, I was sitting in my Jeep in my driveway when I made a call to the distinguished statesman from Barre Town. He was one of the very first people I reached out to—if not the first—because I wanted his honest opinion on whether I should run for State Representative.

His answer was simple: Absolutely.

I don't know if I would have taken that leap if he said something else. But he didn't—and because of that, I'm here today.

After I was elected, he became more than a colleague—he became a mentor and someone I consider as a friend. He is a steady hand. A lighthouse during what has often been a stormy season. He guided me on how to conduct myself, how to approach difficult votes, and how to stay grounded when things got complicated. Time and time again, I turned to him for advice on tough roll calls, and he was always there with wisdom, perspective, and temperance.

Topper, your wisdom and demeanor will be deeply missed by all.

Topper, you will be missed. I will miss you here and I love you."

Rep. Galfetti of Barre Town offered the following remarks:

"Madam Speaker:

Here we are. It has been a week of celebrating a legend and now it's my turn to give it my best. Serving with Topper has been one of the greatest honors of my life. His willingness to mentor me and help me along are not something you can put a price tag on, and come what may, no person that will sit to my left in seat five can ever match my Round man! I am so grateful to Topper, Mary Ann, and the whole McFaun family for the love and compassion

they have shown me. I have rewritten this speech so many times in the last week but must confess never edited it for length.

Topper's mother, Evelyn, I am told, strolled the halls of the home in Cambridge in the weeks leading up to Francis's debut, rubbing her growing stomach and repeating, 'This boy is going to be Tops, everyone Tops, and I am going to call him Topper.' Keep in mind that Topper was grown in the days before ultrasound, so his mother did not know she was having a boy, but I am told she was very strong-willed and stubborn, so Topper was willed into being from the start.

In a tragic turn, young Evelyn passed not long after Topper's arrival but with grit and determination, she had willed him onto this earth, which would fire his soul forever.

And in the meantime, it would be Topper's great-grandfather Francis for whom our young Top was named, and step in with his cane to be our young hero's earliest protector, as Topper drove road laps on his beat-up hand-me-down tricycle in the back yard—imagining himself on a chariot. It was his great-grandfather who shook his cane at the folks from child services, sending them away as he stepped in at age 86, the age Top is now, to look after a child.

Topper grew up quick knowing what it's like to be hungry and fighting through it all. He and his great-grandfather figured out pretty quick that sports were going to be this kid's way out and sports it was, in between brawling with the neighborhood kids. Topper excelled in baseball and yes, of course, hockey! He played for some of Boston's finest prep schools first, then Boston University. He could have gone to Harvard but had some choice words for a headmaster whose recommendation was needed, so B.U. it was.

It was while attending B.U. that Topper would meet the love of his life ,Mary Ann Howland. Mary Ann was not your average kind of girl, she had grown up in West Windsor, Vermont in a very political family. The Howland family has been serving Vermont in the Legislature and many other offices pretty much since there has been a Vermont. Mary Ann however, in the 1960s, had seen enough of West Windsor and was ready to head to Boston and see the world.

And so, Mary Ann and Topper met in Boston just as women's liberation, the civil rights movement, and the beat generation were kicking off. They ducked into cafes to listen to Joan Biaz and Bob Dylan, and they fell deeply in love against the backdrop of a nation changing and evolving at light speed. Topper spent time in the Army and crossed the color line in the South to help some fellow black soldiers out in a bar fight against Jim Crow; and I have no doubt that a bra or two of Mary Ann went up in flames! They were making their

way in the city, but their struggles were not small. Milkcrates for furniture and a long past that Topper couldn't quite escape.

So, the decision was made to cut ties with the city and head North and that is where, or nearly where, the McFaun story turns into a Barre story. They moved onto the old farm at the corner of Windywood and Sunset and began a process of renovating that farmhouse and making it a home that continues to this day!

Now let's be frank, your average flatlander with a Boston accent would be held at arm's length by the boys of Barre in the 1960's. But as we know, Topper is not your average flatlander, indeed he was the equivalent of a Hockey God to the boys of Barre, and it was not long before he was accepted. He went on to coach hockey at Spaulding High School and brought the team to the Championship more than once. It is at this point that Top owes me a thank you, as a certain center in the Championship game wouldn't have made grades if I hadn't given him a good look at my algebra test, but hey it's a team sport!

And Mary Ann wasted no time getting to work teaching in the local schools and running the local 4H Chapter, of which I would eventually become a member, along with their daughter, Molly, who carries on that legacy today. Topper and Mary Ann together have done more work educating the greater Barre area than anyone else I can think of!

I could go on forever, Madam Speaker, because there are at least three Dr. Zhivago-length movies to be written from this man's life and love affair with Mary Ann. I will close with this one thing that is bringing Topper home right now, and that is always his love of family. His grandchildren Conner, Meghan, Collin, Riley, Caitlin, and Josh are his hope for the future and bring him joy every day. I know he is looking forward to connecting with them more, as they embark on their journeys. Without further ado, Madam Speaker, will you and the body please help me in welcoming the Lovely Mary Ann and his children Bennet, Kate, and Molly to the People's House, albeit today it feels like Topper's House!"

Rep. McCoy of Poultney offered the following remarks:

"Madam Speaker:

For the past few weeks, we have been roasting and toasting one of our own, Representative Francis "Topper" McFaun. After twenty years of dedicated service to the State of Vermont, Topper is going home to 'Mum,' his college sweetheart and wife of 62 years, Mary Ann.

What are the chances that in my first term of office, I would be assigned to serve on the House Human Services Committee, with Representative McFaun

-serving as Ranking Member, and current Speaker of the House Jill Krowinski sitting next to me? There were seven freshman legislators assigned to Human Services that year, three of whom were Republicans. We leaned on Representative McFaun to show us the ropes and explain what was going on, and he taught us well.

Topper and I were talking about how we met our spouses. It turns out we both married our college sweethearts. Topper went on to tell me about how intrigued he was with Mary Ann, and that on one of their first few dates, Mary Ann took him to an Art Museum in Boston. He wanted to impress Mary Ann; so, instead of going to his gym class, he audited an art history class. The next visit to the Art Museum, Topper started talking about impressionism, and artists like Monet and Picasso, and what the paintings were trying to impart to the viewer, and how the painting made him ‘feel.’ I’m sure Mary Ann was thinking, ‘Who are you and what have you done with Topper?’ I think Mary Ann was already impressed by the man he was.

To Topper’s sense of humor: I’ll preface this next story by saying there’s probably a 4–5-inch height difference between Topper and me.

So, Topper and I serve on committees on the third floor. One day, I was about to go up the stairs and Topper was coming down. I had to talk to Topper, so he stopped on the last step, with me standing on the floor, and I began to talk to him. After a minute or so he stopped me, looked me in the eye and said: ‘So this is what it’s like to be tall.’

Topper, your stature is larger than life, regardless of your height.

I will end with a poem by Grady Poulard, ‘A Measure of a Man:’

The measure of a man is not determined
By his show of outward strength
Or the volume of his voice
Or the thunder of his actions
Or of his intellect or academic abilities
It is seen rather in terms of the love that he has
For his family and for everyone
The strength of his commitments
The genuineness of his friendships
The sincerity of his purpose
The quiet courage of his convictions
The fun, laughter, joy and happiness he gives to his
family and to others
His love of life
His patience and his honesty

And his contentment with what he has

Representative McFaun, our sincere and heartfelt thanks to you for your steadfast commitment to your constituents, to this House, and to the citizens of our great State of Vermont. You have served us all well.

We wish you much happiness and joy as you begin the next chapter of your life.

Godspeed.”

Speaker Krowinski of Burlington offered the following remarks:

“Member from Barre Town, we thank you so much for your service. You’ve been a voice of compassion and compromise, and you’ve been a voice for those who struggle to find a voice in this building. You leave a legacy to be deeply proud of, and you’ll see that legacy in your communities, through different kids and programs. You have made a difference. You have made a difference. We thank you so much for your service and wish you all the best.

Thank you, member.”

Rep. Marcotte of Coventry offered the following remarks:

“Madam Speaker:

Like my hair, our ranks of the freshman class of 2005 are thinning out and I think I just lost another strand today. There are three members left in this House and after today there will be two, myself and Representative Canfield. We also have Senator Clarkson that came in with us. Also, Senator Morley has rejoined the General Assembly, albeit on the other side. Also, Madam Speaker, you were part of our class as well but not as a legislator, as the Executive Assistant to Speaker Symington.

We all had big dreams then. I think some of those dreams came true. We all worked together. When I was listening to everyone speaking about Topper, one thing that really struck me was that he is a true leader. The mentoring that he did, did not matter what party you were from, as long as you are here to help people, he was going to help you.

So, Topper, it’s been an honor and a privilege to serve with you for these last twenty-two years and as we always hear, we’re a family. We have eleven sessions worth of family—we’re in a pretty big family. Not quite as big as Alice’s but pretty big. There are some classmates that came here to see you off as well: Former Representatives Patti Komline, Sue Minter, Michelle Kupersmith, and our Secretary of State, Sarah Copeland Hanzas are here with us as well. So please welcome them to the House as well, Madam Speaker.”

**Committee Bill; Favorable Reports; Second Reading;
Third Reading Ordered**

H. 952

Rep. Emmons of Springfield spoke for the Committee on Corrections and Institutions.

House bill, entitled

An act relating to capital construction and State bonding budget adjustment

Rep. Waszazak of Barre City, for the Committee on Ways and Means, recommended that the bill ought to pass.

Rep. Laroche of Franklin, for the Committee on Appropriations, recommended that the bill ought to pass.

The bill, having appeared on the Notice Calendar, was taken up, read the second time, and third reading ordered.

Message from the Senate No. 38

A message was received from the Senate by Ms. Gradel, its Assistant Secretary, as follows:

Madam Speaker:

I am directed to inform the House that:

The Senate has considered a bill originating in the House of the following title:

H. 694. An act relating to approval of amendments to the charter of the Town of Bennington concerning the Town Manager.

And has passed the same in concurrence.

The Senate has on its part adopted Senate concurrent resolution of the following title:

S.C.R. 9. Senate concurrent resolution extending the warmest 90th birthday and 30th anniversary wishes to former Rutland County Senators Judith E. Bloomer Crowley and John P. Crowley.

The Senate has on its part adopted concurrent resolutions originating in the House of the following titles:

H.C.R. 239. House concurrent resolution congratulating the winning teams at the 18th annual Jr Iron Chef VT culinary extravaganza.

H.C.R. 240. House concurrent resolution congratulating Stephen R. Bissette on his designation as the sixth Vermont Cartoonist Laureate.

H.C.R. 241. House concurrent resolution congratulating University of Vermont Distinguished Professor and Vermont Climatologist Dr. Lesley-Ann Dupigny-Giroux on winning the Mani L. Bhaumik Award for Public Engagement with Science.

H.C.R. 242. House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2026 Mount Anthony Union High School Patriots on winning the Division I boys' Nordic skiing championship.

H.C.R. 243. House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2026 Fair Haven Union High School Slaters bowling team on winning a second consecutive State championship.

H.C.R. 244. House concurrent resolution recognizing the week of April 11–17, 2026, as Black Maternal Health Week in Vermont.

H.C.R. 245. House concurrent resolution celebrating the importance of the Vermont visitor economy and recognizing April 16, 2026, as Tourism Economy Day at the State House.

H.C.R. 246. House concurrent resolution designating April 10, 2026, as Vermont Children's Alliance Day at the State House.

Adjournment

At eleven o'clock and thirteen minutes in the forenoon, on motion of **Rep. McCoy of Poultney**, the House adjourned until Tuesday, April 7, 2026, at ten o'clock in the forenoon, pursuant to the provisions of J.R.S. 47.

Concurrent Resolutions Adopted

The following concurrent resolutions, having been placed on the Consent Calendar on the preceding legislative day, and no member having requested floor consideration as provided by Rule 16b of the Joint Rules of the Senate and House of Representatives, are hereby adopted on the part of the House:

H.C.R. 239

House concurrent resolution congratulating the winning teams at the 18th annual Jr Iron Chef VT culinary extravaganza

H.C.R. 240

House concurrent resolution congratulating Stephen R. Bissette on his designation as the sixth Vermont Cartoonist Laureate

H.C.R. 241

House concurrent resolution congratulating University of Vermont Distinguished Professor and Vermont Climatologist Dr. Lesley-Ann Dupigny-Giroux on winning the Mani L. Bhaumik Award for Public Engagement with Science

H.C.R. 242

House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2026 Mount Anthony Union High School Patriots on winning the Division I boys' Nordic skiing championship

H.C.R. 243

House concurrent resolution congratulating the 2026 Fair Haven Union High School Slaters bowling team on winning a second consecutive State championship

H.C.R. 244

House concurrent resolution recognizing the week of April 11–17, 2026, as Black Maternal Health Week in Vermont

H.C.R. 245

House concurrent resolution celebrating the importance of the Vermont visitor economy and recognizing April 16, 2026, as Tourism Economy Day at the State House

H.C.R. 246

House concurrent resolution designating April 10, 2026, as Vermont Children's Alliance Day at the State House

S.C.R. 9

Senate concurrent resolution extending the warmest 90th birthday and 30th anniversary wishes to former Rutland County Senators Judith E. Bloomer Crowley and John P. Crowley.

[The full text of the concurrent resolutions appeared in the House *and* Senate Calendar Addendums on the preceding legislative day and will appear in the Public Acts and Resolves of the 2026 Adjourned Session.]