



## INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET

### Long-Time Activist for Tibet Grace Spring Passes Away

<https://www.savetibet.org/long-time-activist-for-tibet-grace-spring-passes-away/>

March 30, 2018

Grace Spring, artist, long-time Tibet supporter and a Board member of the International Campaign for Tibet passed away in Middlebury, VT, on March 29, 2018. She had Alzheimer's.

A resident of Washington, DC for many years, Grace relocated, in early 2017, to Middlebury in Vermont, close to where her daughter Cassandra Corcoran resides. Corcoran said that in the period before her passing away, Grace was in an incredibly happy mood.

In a message of condolence, the Board of Directors and staff of the International Campaign for Tibet expressed deep sadness and sent their thoughts and prayers to her family. Board Vice Chairman Gare Smith said, "Grace was a steadfast, loyal, and creative supporter of the cause and her spirit will be missed."

In consideration of her many decades of contribution in putting a spotlight on Tibet, the Boards of the International Campaign for Tibet decided in 2017 to confer on her a special Light of Truth Award.

Richard Gere, Chairman of the International Campaign for Tibet, informed Grace that this Light of Truth was to recognize "the countless contributions you have made to Tibet, the Tibetan people and His Holiness the Dalai Lama over the past several decades. You have been a fearless and committed activist- not just for our work at the International Campaign for Tibet, but to the broader Tibet movement."

He added, "I know this does not mean your work on Tibet is finished as I am certain that Tibet and the Tibetan people continue to be in your thinking at all times but what it does mean is that, we recognize you for your many, meaningful contributions to this work and we would like to honor the extraordinary light that you have shown to the Tibet issue."

ICT President Matteo Mecacci [presented the award](#), a traditional Tibetan butter lamp symbolizing the light the recipient has shed on the cause of Tibet, during the Tibetan Association of Vermont's Losar (Tibetan New Year) reception in Burlington on February 17, 2018. "She was someone who really carried the struggle for Tibet and the awareness of Tibet to Washington, DC, in a very special way," Mecacci said. In brief remarks then, Grace said, "I just want you to know that this is a huge honor from the Tibetans. I am overjoyed on what has happened and may it be very wonderful ... Thank you so much."

Starting in 1988, Grace Spring held a solo vigil every Friday morning in front of the Chinese Embassy in Washington with a Tibetan national flag and a placard, drawing attention to the plight of the Tibetan people. In an interview to the Washington Post in December 1989, Grace said she initiated the vigil after the Chinese Government's clampdown on Tibetan demonstrators in Tibet in 1987. "I asked myself what is possible for me to do as an American, just by myself," Spring told the Washington Post. "It only takes one witness. I stand there, carrying the Tibetan flag and a sign."

The Dalai Lama, in a letter of appreciation to Grace Spring on March 4, 1989, said, "I am very touched by your continued support of our struggle. The American public has been very sympathetic to us and your vigil in front of the Chinese Embassy is a symbol of this."

In a report on November 6, 1997 headlined "Rain or shine, Tibet vigil carries on", the Deseret News said this, "Every Friday, Grace Spring gets up and drives to the Chinese Embassy to hold a silent vigil. For 10 years now, she has been waging a one-woman protest against China's hard-line rule in Tibet. Thousands of motorists drive by as Spring stands there, clutching her Tibetan flag. It rains. It snows. She hopes her persistence will encourage others to take an interest in her cause."

In addition to serving on the Board of the International Campaign for Tibet, Grace founded an organization for Tibet in Washington, DC, and had served as a regional director of the US Tibet Committee.