

**Memorial Resolution – Daña Alder
January 5, 1948 – December 22, 2014**

Daña Alder, former UW-Madison academic staff member, district 447 representative, and member of the Academic Staff Executive Committee, passed away unexpectedly in her home on Monday, December 22, 2014. She is survived by her sister, Laura Maynor, of Colorado; brother, W.F. “Skipp” (Patsy) Maynor, of Ohio; her niece, Beth, and her family, of Arizona; nephew, Justin, of Ohio; her chosen children, Louis and Ben (Stephanie) Cashin; chosen grandson, Finn Cashin; beloved companion dog, Chloë; and an intentional lesbian family. She was born Barbra Griffith Maynor on Jan. 5, 1948, in Mullens, West Virginia, the daughter of Wirt F. and Ruth Griffith Maynor.

For many years, Daña Alder was my supervisor, my ersatz aunt, and my friend. We did not always agree, but, just as she showed up to work every day as her authentic self, she encouraged me to do the same. She identified, without hesitation, as a “Radical Butch Lesbian Activist Feminist.” Six months after I was hired, she caught me taking a deep breath of nervousness before a campus meeting, and said, “I believe in you,” and this is who she was to me. Someone who believed in the people around her. Daña worked in University Health Services at UW-Madison from October 1998 until her retirement in January 2013.

Daña was very proud of her West Virginia roots and of having received her mother’s maiden name as her middle name. She graduated from Greenbrier Junior College for Women in Lewisburg, W.V., in June 1967, and earned her bachelor’s degree in journalism/public relations from Kent State University, Kent, Ohio, in Dec. 1969. In the mid 1970’s, Daña moved to Louisville, Kentucky, and was radicalized by feminism and lesbianism. In the 1980s, she moved to Madison and worked in the State of Wisconsin Department of Industry, the State of Wisconsin Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention and Services Board, and eventually, on campus at the University Health Services, as a team manager. With a passion from early on for social justice, Daña’s regularly said her job at UHS was a perfect fit.

In her role at UHS, Daña served as the staff advisor to the student organization Sex Out Loud, authored a booklet on lesbian health, and chaired the UHS committee on equity and diversity. She facilitated discussions among student activists and medical providers and was very active in the Academic Staff Assembly and other shared governance efforts. Outside of work, Daña whittled wood, acted, sang, walked her dog, encouraged community support as the co-moderator of a local lesbian email discussion list, and volunteered with political campaigns, the Michigan Womyn’s Music Festival, and the National Women’s Music festival. Daña was a pagan goddess woman and involved with her local congregation, the Reformed Congregation of the Goddess-International.

Daña’s memorial service was held on what would have been her 66th birthday, and was full of friends, colleagues, family, and her spirit. Among the memories offered up about Daña in the time since her death are the following:

“Daña was real and sincere and I think what I liked most about her was that she was able to spread the Wisconsin spirit and at the same time challenged our actions and philosophies/beliefs to make us better.”

“Daña was an incredible mentor to me during my college years at UW-Madison and beyond. She was such a good listener and helped me process so many new experiences as a student leader with Sex Out Loud. She opened my eyes to new ways to make change in one's community and really encouraged me to head to Washington D.C. to work on federal policy. That move changed my life.”

“I learned more about her adventurous spirit and activism. Daña was one of my favorite people, and a butch role model for me. I will miss her, and speak her name in sacred space.”

Blessed Be.

Respectfully submitted,

*Carmen Neimeko Hotvedt, University Health Services
Academic Staff Assembly District 447 Representative*