LIFE IN AN INTENTIONAL COMMUNITY IN A THRIVING DEMOCRACY
By Susan J. Barry

What if it means . . .

1. We treat Earth as a living biological entity, with its own needs for the survival of its natural systems (consumption, growth, pruning/maintenance, and waste management) and we believe that our own health and future success are directly linked to understanding the life-giving processes and healthy functioning of Earth’s innate nurturing systems as well as its destructive ones (aka natural disasters)?

2. School curricula emphasizes creative, whole-mind developing skills—the real basics: visual and graphic art, music, dance, body/brain knowledge, movement (physical education), written expression and communication, cooperative problem solving, intercultural history (not based mainly on war and conquest), resource management (use of money and property) and healthy lifestyle processes (food, farming, cooking, clothes-making, animal-care, family promotion, maintenance, recycling)—in conjunction with math/language/technology/literacy/science?

3. The recognition and rewards of personal satisfaction, accomplishment and safety are not based on accumulation of consumable things (property and tangible material possessions) and paper treasure (money, stocks and bonds, deeds, IOUs) but instead on a wealth of ideas for helping those who need us; for sustainable development of innovative, beneficial projects; for safe life-enhancing products; and for generous participation in local, state and national governing?

4. The concept of “shared transportation” becomes a rationale for designing vehicles and commercial centers, so that home delivery of food and furnishings could overcome the need for separate and individual transport: ordering online and by phone and meeting the eco-friendly delivery truck outside our own doors; traveling via train and re-designed buses/vans (which would be comfortable and convenient) to other neighborhoods and further destinations; dramatic improvement in air quality by use of non-toxic propellants in our conveyances, like compressed air?

5. One of the signs of a successful economy is based not only on “new construction starts,” but also on re-construction projects featuring homes of varying economic styles around community resources (organic farms and gardens, small businesses and needed medical and other services) in now-empty city centers and on re-claimed property, with the re-use of safe excess and salvaged materials from other demolition or building projects (barn wood, windows and doors, bricks and stone, roof timbers, etc.)? Or build systems-sustainable eco-dwellings?

6. The purchasing of costly technical “labor saving” devices and the accompanying need to keep in shape by working off our sedentary fat reserves in pricey gyms dressed in
expensive work-out gear can be replaced by the exercise of going into our neighbors’ homes (by invitation) and working physically hard to assist them with household, gardening chores and home improvement projects?

7. We still want/need to go to the gym or pool for socialization and specialized “toning,” and while there, we hook up our riding/rowing/walking machines and swimming harnesses to an electrical grid that generates power for the facility as well as for local homes and businesses?

8. The concept of “asylum” is re-introduced as a way of serving mentally and emotionally ill citizens who are threats to others or to themselves by temporarily taking care of them in a health-promoting facility, providing counseling and other medical attention, giving them a safe environment for healing, and providing them with skills to benefit the greater population (life-skills, communication skills, food production, and self-maintenance skills, construction skills for actual products/tools/clothes) so that their return to home and family life will bring improved coping mechanisms and health?

9. The processes of “collaboration,” “communication,” “cooperation,” “community,” “co-existence,” and “contribution” are given equal billing and encouragement with “competition and conflict” as guiding principles for successful and beneficial shared life on this planet?

10. We people—wherever we are and with whatever we have—seek to honor the “best” within ourselves, take our courage and face up to the challenges to that “best” self in each encounter with other ideas and people, and dedicate time each day to making thoughtful and generous contributions to the healthy future of this precious celestial residence we temporarily inhabit?

What if . . . ?