

## **Jeff Yeates (Adult) 1<sup>st</sup> Place**

### **Title: A Whole New World Starts Now – Be Your Own Magic Fairy**

January 2020. In an interesting coincidence of timing, I started reading “Wanderings”, which tells a fictional story about a fungal plague burning through the world. A small group of survivors migrate to the Colorado Rocky Mountains to start up a new and better world, and then the story ends. But here in non-fiction land, the story is still going; in fact, we feel like we’re still in the same old world with the same problems and disputes hanging on, like stains that just won’t come out. I couldn’t do much about those problems before the COVID-19 pandemic -- couldn’t stop CO2 emissions, couldn’t force leaders to be kind and civil, couldn’t stop people from overdosing on fentanyl and hopelessness.

In the midst of the 2020 COVID lockdowns, we cut out a comic strip -- not a bad place to find some wisdom -- and stuck it on our fridge. In the strip, the wholesome Pig from “Pearls Before Swine” asks a magic fairy to fix all the world’s problems. Magic fairy gently confesses to innocent Pig that she doesn’t actually exist. But he does. The strip ends with Pig becoming his own fairy, running off to do good, including a food bank donation.

We know there is no magic fairy, but we so often wish there were -- some leader, some group or entity, who will step forth and save us from our problems. But it’s always just us that have to do the saving and isn’t that kind of wonderful?

All over the world, we saw magic fairies: they were doctors and nurses who sacrificed so much to save lives, scientists who furiously worked to develop a vaccine in an unheard of time frame of less than a year, children giving up their activities, teenagers their graduations, with minimal complaining, because that’s what was needed to save the world. Am I going to sit and wait for the magic fairy to make things right or am I going to do something? The local food bank dropbox is right down the street, I’ll see you there.