

The Flying Fickle Finger of Fate is what happens to you while you make other plans with your life. It is a force of nature and must always be reckoned with in an Air Force officer's career. It may be a force for good or bad but must be endured somehow.

Obviously it is **Flying** because you are in the Air Force. It is very **Fickle** because no one knows who, when, where or how it will strike but it will. And it is a **Finger of Fate** because it always points directly at someone, usually YOU. This is an **Event** because since it has no formal or official backing it can not be called a presentation or ceremony.



The Event to give Legacy Sabers to cadets fits neatly into this category because the cadet does absolutely nothing to earn or deserve the freely given saber. He or she just happens to fill part or all of the criteria the donor asks for. The Flying Fickle Finger of Fate Event is named as such because of this very nature and because it was my parade and I got to name it. The whole process started because a good friend asked me to be in his wedding a few weeks after graduation in Port Arthur Texas. There are no sabers available for rental there so I purchased one to honor a friend and his lovely bride. After the wedding I gave the saber to my parents to honor them for not drowning me during my sometimes obnoxious formative years.

The first time the Flying Fickle Finger of Fate zapped me was when I took the Air Force Enlistment Qualification Examination. I scored high enough to attract the attention of one of the best Academy Liaison Officers, Maj Lauren Houston from Wisconsin. His interest and assistance were vital in getting me a regular Air Force appointment to the USAF Academy Preparatory School. I had been zapped. I can cite many other instances of being zapped during my career and life but seriously this was the biggest zap.

This Legacy Saber program was also the result of a Flying Fickle Finger of Fate zapping. When my mother gave me back the saber after almost 50 years I decided to give it to a cadet. Since I had started the academy as the oldest cadet in my class I decided to give it to the oldest cadet in the 50th year Legacy Class. The call I made to locate this individual was to an Air Officer Commanding who happened to be the OIC for the 100 Night ceremony. He in turn mentioned it to C1C Victoria Rodriguez his cadet OIC. Cadet Rodriguez asked the vital question "How many of your classmates want to join you?" Without this zapping we would not have been able to give a total of 18 sabers from 19 classmates. The Flying Fickle Finger of Fate even intervened there by having a person with a broken saber but good

scabbard call in just before a person with a good saber but rusted useless scabbard called. Most of the sabers given are also recycled from previous presentations to parents.

The recipients are given these sabers to do what they will with. The only difference from the saber originally obtained 50 years ago is that these sabers have names engraved on them. The Flying Fickle Finger of Fate has struck the recipient and it is now their responsibility deal with it. Whatever they do with the saber they are cautioned to remember that their name is on the saber and that they should endeavor to keep it out of a Thrift Store window. Hopefully they will engrave their rank and a new name of a son or daughter or grandchild or protégé or if they still have it in 50 years to a cadet selected by some whimsical criteria they want. They can see the Flying Fickle Finger of Fate zap another cadet.