

The passing of Major General Robert “Bob” L. Smolen, United States Air Force, retired.



On Sunday, May 18, 2014, the gates of heaven opened to receive one of our own, Major General Robert “Bob” Smolen (ret.). Bob had been bravely battling cancer since his diagnosis in October of last year. He was at home and surrounded by his loving family and friends at the end. Our thoughts and prayers are with them during this difficult time.

Bob has been a Senior National Security Fellow at the Center for Global Security Research at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL) for seven years. In this role, he provided effective interfaces with a vast span of scientific and technical communities. Bob had broad expertise and insight in national and international security issues, ranging from traditional defense to nonproliferation, counterproliferation, counterterrorism, arms control, energy security, and weapons-of-mass-destruction areas. Bill Goldstein, Director of LLNL recalled that, “Bob was a soldier-scholar whose positive influence touched many throughout his extraordinary career. We have been very fortunate to have someone of Bob’s caliber, experience and compassion working for the Laboratory. He has mentored a new generation of national security scholars and patriots who will carry his legacy forward.”

Prior to his time with us at Livermore, General Smolen served as Deputy Administrator for Defense Programs at the U.S. Department of Energy's National Nuclear Security Administration. He served as commander for the Air Force District of Washington until his retirement from the U.S. Air Force in August 2007. He also served as Director for Strategic Policy and Arms Control at the National Security Council. He was a special advisor to the Strategic Advisory Group at USSTRATCOM and was currently serving on the Board of Directors of both the Army and Air Force Mutual Aid Association, and the National Capitol Council of the Boy Scouts of America. From 1998-2004, he held various positions at the Pentagon, including Director of Nuclear and Counterproliferation, at USAF headquarters, and Director for Manpower and Personnel for the Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. He served twice in the Office of the Secretary of the Air Force, Legislative Liaison, first in the House of Representatives, and later as the Chief of the Senate Office. In addition, he commanded units at the squadron, group, wing, and major command levels.

Bob's commitment to public service was legendary. He was a Distinguished Eagle Scout and has received the Department Of Energy's Exceptional Service Award, the USAF Distinguished Service Medal, and numerous other major awards and decorations. He served more than five years on the National Board of Governors of the American Red Cross.

Bob was also an avid and accomplished scuba diver. He dived all over the world, including most recently in Truk, Palau, the Galapagos, and cage diving with the great whites near Guadalupe Island. This is a passion he shared most especially with his children.

As NNSA Administrator, Frank Klotz, recently noted, "Bob touched so many lives with his unwavering commitment to our enduring mission; his deeply-felt compassion for our military members, government employees and their families; and, his winning smile and delightful sense of humor. He was truly a great American, who made a positive and lasting difference in all that he accomplished."

Bob is survived by his wife, Adriane; his daughters, Amanda and Emily and his son, Robby Lee Smolen II. Bob's family noted his passing on CaringBridge with the following:

We miss you already <3 ... By [Bob Smolen Family](#)

"It is with heavy hearts that we share the passing of Bob Smolen today at 2:38pm. Bob was an amazing husband, father, brother, son, uncle, cousin, friend, mentor and the list goes on. He has come into all our lives and I know touched our hearts and had amazing impact on each and every one of us. He will be missed.

Our family will be sending all the details for the funeral soon. Thanks again for everyone who has been part of this journey with us. Bob was taken too soon but his legacy will out live us all <3

Love always,
Bob Smolen Family xoxo

We will continue to keep Bob and his family in our thoughts and prayers. Please feel free to send your notes of condolence to General Smolen's family through:

<http://www.caringbridge.org/visit/bobsmolen/>

