

# ROBERT POLLMANN



Robert A Pollmann was born and raised in Minneapolis MN. He graduated from the University of Minnesota with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Aeronautical Engineering in 1969.

At that time, the Vietnam draft was in effect, and Robert figured that being out of college he was probably due to be drafted. At the time, military service wasn't necessarily a question of if but more of when. He felt he should serve and wanted to enlist to try to get a position in aviation, which he enjoyed.

Bob wanted to fly, and was recruited to be a potential helicopter pilot. While waiting for a slot for flight school, he was to work in aviation maintenance as a crew member and crew chief for UH-1 helicopters.

He entered military service on January 16, 1970, as a member of the 385th Engineer Group, Fort Snelling Minnesota. He was sent to Fort Jackson South Carolina in June 1970 for basic training. At Fort Jackson he got a bit of an awakening. Summer in South Carolina was much hotter and humid than he was used to in Minnesota. Also as a 23 year old, he was older than most of the Drill Instructors and Mess Sergeants that were constantly yelling at him. He eventually became acclimated to the heat and the discipline structure of Army basic training, but never fully enjoyed it. He graduated from basic in August, and was sent to Fort Rucker Alabama for AIT (Advanced Individual Training).

Fort Rucker was the primary aviation school for Army personnel. Pollmann was sent to train to become a helicopter mechanic/ crewchief. AIT was a nearly three month course, being quite different from basic training. Although military discipline and physical fitness was important at AIT, the primary focus was on the job training. Through classroom and hands on training, Bob graduated from AIT in October 1971.

He was assigned to the 385th Engineer Group Aviation Section, as a helicopter crew chief. He soon realized that the slot for becoming a helicopter pilot was not going to happen. With the ending of hostilities from the Vietnam War, there was a rapid draw down in the need for helicopter pilots and Pollmann was one of them. He decided to apply for a commission as an Officer in the US Army Reserves.

Upon completion of the Officer Pre-Commission course in 1971 and based on his civilian education, he was awarded a direct commission as a Second Lieutenant on 2 June 1972 with the Corps of Engineers. He served as a Bridge Platoon Leader for the 652nd Engineer Company, Float Bridge in Ellsworth Wisconsin.

The 652nd specialized in building floating Pontoon bridges to transport troops and supplies across rivers and streams. As Platoon leader, Pollmann was in charge of a group working to build the structures in a fast and efficient manner.

In order to work up the ranks of the Army, Bob completed the Engineer Officer Basic course in 1973. This was primarily a correspondence course and tests to prepare for advancement in rank and responsibility. He was promoted to First Lieutenant on 1 Jun 1975. He then continued to the Engineer Officer Advanced course, which was both correspondence and active duty. After completing the three two week active duty phases, he graduated from the advanced course in 1976.



1st Lieutenant



Captain

With the schooling required for further promotions in place, Bob's time with the 652nd Engineers came to a close. In April 1978, he was transferred to the 385th Engineer Group as a Communications-Electronics Staff Officer in the Communications section. He was also

promoted to Captain on 15 September 1978.

Pollmann's service with the 385th would last a little over three years. In October 1981, Pollmann was appointed S-4 (Supply Officer) of the 367th Engineer Battalion.

Specifically, the task of the 367th Engineer Battalion is to serve as a Combat Support unit providing Engineering support for combat units. They strive to create mobility, counter mobility and survivability in the field.



367th Engineer Battalion

In June 1983, Pollmann was assigned to his first command position as the Commander of Company A, 367th Engineers in Brainerd Minnesota. He remained at this post until May 1985, when he was sent back to the 385th Engineer Group.

As the company commander, Pollmann was in charge of all soldiers in the Brainerd unit. The 367th Engineers are now headquartered out of St. Cloud Minnesota. During his service with Company A, Bob served on training exercises at Fort McCoy Wisconsin, and Camp Ripley Minnesota.

In June 1985, he became the S-2 (Intelligence Officer) for the 385th Engineer Group. As the S-2, Bob helped collect data on battlefield deployments, enemy movements and strengths, and made recommendations to command. Although the activities were simulated or war games, it did help to prepare the men for possibilities of combat.



Major

On 14 September 1985, Pollmann was promoted to Major. He continued to serve in the S-2 position with the 385th until May 1987.



Command & General Staff College

In June 1987 he assumed the responsibility of S-3 (Training & Operations) of the 367th Engineer Battalion. As S-3, Bob scheduled and monitored the training within the unit. He also worked to coordinate all movements of the unit and was responsible for Training and Unit Readiness, like an S-3 position would do in time of war.

While with the 367th, Pollmann attended the Command & General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth Kansas.

The resident and non-resident course trains intermediate level Army Officers to prepare to be field grade officers. Sometimes called "Major's College" the course is required for further promotion in the military. The College lists their mission as, "The US Army Command and General Staff College (USACGSC) educates and develops leaders for full spectrum joint, interagency and multinational operations; acts as lead agent for the Army's leader development program; and advances the art and science of the profession of arms in support of Army operational requirements."



Lieutenant Colonel

Pollmann attended some classes on campus in Kansas, and did some classes through a correspondence program. He graduated from the course in 1988.

In December 1988 he was assigned as Unit Training Officer, Deputy Chief of Staff, Training for the 88th RSC (Regional Support Command). He held this position for a year, leaving in November 1989 to become the Executive Officer of the 367th Engineer Battalion at Fort Snelling in St. Paul.

Pollmann's job as the Executive Officer (XO) was to help coordinate the day to day operations of the battalion and coordinate all aspects of its training, and preparedness. He helped make sure that the mission goals are set and achieved. While XO of the 367th, he was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel on 13 September 1992.

In July 1992, Robert was assigned as the Provost Marshal, Deputy Chief of Staff - Operations for the 88th U.S. Army Command. In this position Pollmann was in charge of safety and security within the 88th Command, and oversaw operations of the unit. He served in this capacity until December 1992 when he became Battalion Commander of the 367th Engineer Battalion.

As Battalion Commander he oversaw all aspects of the duties of Battalion Staff and support personnel. In 1995 Pollmann and members of the battalion were deployed to Guatemala as a part of Joint Task Force Timberwolf.



In Guatemala Robert served as rotation commander of the Joint Army Engineer, Seabee (Navy) and Red Horse (Air Force) Task Force. The missions were humanitarian construction missions where soldiers constructed schools, clinics, and bridges for the communities of Guatemala. The 367th Battalion supplied engineering staff for over five months. In July 1995, the headquarters of the 367th Engineer Battalion was moved to St. Cloud MN. After returning from Guatemala, Pollmann left the battalion and began serving as the Executive Officer of the 5th Brigade, 85th Division in March 1996. He also was completing Distance Learning Course of the US Army War College.

The US Army War College is located in Carlisle Barracks Pennsylvania, and is designed to instruct and educate “ leaders for service at the strategic level while advancing knowledge in the global application of Landpower.”

Much of Bob’s course work for the War College was done via correspondence work, but he did attend two specific phases and events in Pennsylvania. To attend, a Lieutenant Colonel or Colonel must be board selected. The courses are designed for advancement of Officers with Battalion-level command experience and the potential to become General Officers.

Pollmann graduated in the Class of 1996 from the War College earning the equivalent of a Master’s in Strategic Arts degree.



Colonel

He became the Deputy Chief of Staff Operations - Training for the 88th Regional Support Command in June 1997 when he left the 5th Brigade. This assignment was a temporary position lasting through September 1997. On 11 July 1997 Bob was promoted to Colonel.

As a Colonel, Pollmann assumed command of the 8802nd Headquarters Brigade at Fort Snelling Minnesota in October 1997. This position put Pollmann in command of multiple battalions which made up the Brigade. A typical Army Brigade can consist of between 1,500 - 3,500 personnel. Bob oversaw all the activities of the subordinate units within the Brigade he commanded. He had a number of staff officers who reported information to him, and allowed him to make decisions on the course of actions for the Brigade.

As a member of the Army Reserve and a reserve commander, Bob was able to continue with a Civilian career as well. He was President and CEO of MicroPure Filtration Inc. in Minnesota. The company specializes in engineered filtration systems for the Food & Beverage Industry. They distributed throughout North America with customers in Europe and Western Asia. Bob completed numerous postgraduate courses in marketing, business and German language.

In June 1999, the Army decided to change aspects of the unit the Pollmann was in command of, the 8802nd; it the 644th Area Support Group, which Colonel Pollmann became Group Commander.

Along with change, came a recognition for Pollmann for his Engineer Service.



Insignia of the 644th Area Support Group



**Bronze Order of the de Fleury Medal donated by Pollmann in April 2009.**

In June 1999, Colonel Pollmann was awarded the Corps of Engineers Bronze “de Fleury” Award by the Chief of Engineers, Lieutenant General Joe N Ballard.

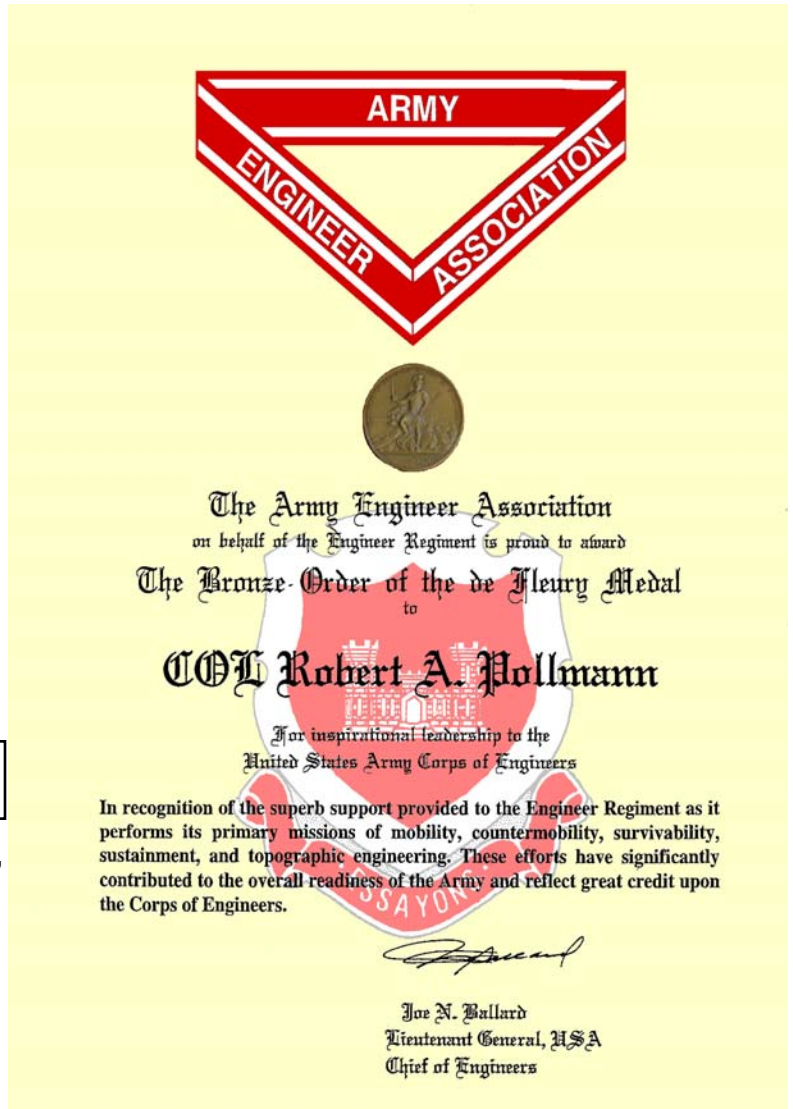
The Engineer Regiment makes three award levels of the de Fleury Medal. The BRONZE Medal may be presented to an individual who has rendered significant service or support to an element of the Engineer Regiment. The SILVER Medal may only be awarded to an individual who has rendered outstanding and significant support or service to the Engineer Regiment. The United States Army Chief of Engineers awards only one GOLD Medal each year to an individual who exemplifies boldness, courage, and commitment to a strong national defense. Presentation of the de Fleury Medal, to those individuals meeting established criteria, was started by the Engineer Regiment as the move of the Engineer School from Fort Belvoir, Virginia to Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri was completed in 1989. The GOLD Medal presentation is the highlight of the annual Engineer Regimental Dinner held at Fort Leonard Wood each spring.

The History of the “de Fleury” medal is as follows, per the Army web site:

“As the Corps of Engineers implemented the US Army Regimental system, the senior Engineer leadership sought a method for the Corps of Engineers to honor those individuals who have provided significant contributions to Army Engineering.

The Army Regimental System was developed to emphasize the history, customs, and traditions of the Corps; so MG Daniel R. Schroeder, then Commanding General of Fort Leonard Wood and Engineer School Commandant, wanted an award that would tie in with the beginnings of the nation and the Army Corps of Engineers.

In 1777, a French Engineer volunteered to serve with the American Army in its fight for independence from Britain. Francois Louis Tessedre de Fleury was born in St. Hippolyte, France in 1749; was trained as an engineer; and served in the French Army during the Corsican campaign.



The Continental Congress appointed de Fleury a captain of engineers, and he quickly proved himself. Wounded at the battles of Fort Mifflin and Brandywine (where his horse was shot out from under him), he soon became Lt. Col. de Fleury.

But it was in the desperate battle at Stony Point, New York in 1779 that de Fleury's courage under fire won him the accolades of Congress.

In June of 1779 two small American forts were being established on the Hudson River at Stony Point and Verplanck's Point, about 30 miles from Manhattan Island. A large British force easily captured both sites. The enemy began building a strong defensive perimeter around Stony Point. The Point was actually a peninsula jutting nearly half a mile into the Hudson, tipped with rocky crags which shot up 150 feet above the river. On the landward side was swamp which flooded at high tide, sinking a causeway running to the shore under two feet of water and making the Point an island.

The formidable defense included several batteries partially connected by trenches, log and earth redoubts around the main fort, and a double abatis. It was called "Little Gibraltar".

General George Washington was disturbed by the capture of the two forts. British occupation gave them control of a vital segment of the river and rerouted American communications, supplies and troops moving between New England and the other colonies. Worse, General Washington was convinced the enemy was preparing to strike West Point, less than 15 miles upriver.

American reinforcements were quickly moved into position north of Stony Point, but Washington thought there was no hope of recapture. A recently formed light infantry corps led by the daring Brigadier General "Mad" Anthony Wayne, consisted of hand picked combat veterans. The group was made up of four regiments of about 340 men each. Colonel Christian "Old Denmark" Febiger headed the 1st Regiment with de Fleury as second in command.

On July 15th the Corps, except for a small diversionary force, unloaded weapons and turned in their ammunition. Secrecy was so tight the troops did not know they were going to attempt to recapture Stony Point. For such a risky assault, surprise was vital; and the attack was to take place in total darkness. Fixed bayonets and hand-to-hand combat were the orders of the day.

Wayne's column had no sooner sloshed into the waist-deep water before a British picket sent up an alarm. During the fierce fighting, Wayne and Febiger both suffered stunning head wounds. The Continentals scrambled up the rocky slope with de Fleury in the lead. First over the wall, de Fleury was followed by a wave of American bayonets. Rushing to the flag pole, de Fleury cut the British colors from their staff.

In addition to the recapture of Stony Point, the defeat of the British fired the Americans' determination and lifted their morale. And it showed the enemy that the colonies had an able fighting force.

So it was that on 1 October 1779, de Fleury stood before the Continental Congress to be praised for his valor at Stony Point by the men who had penned the Declaration of Independence and would later sign the constitution. For his intrepid behavior, the Continental Congress awarded a medal struck in his honor.

The Engineer Regiment adopted the de Fleury Medal as an award because of the values demonstrated by the man for whom it was struck - values of special meaning to Engineer Soldiers. It is understood that the de Fleury Medal was the first Congressional Medal struck, if not the first medal authorized.

On the obverse of the medal is the Latin inscription meaning: "A MEMORIAL AND REWARD FOR COURAGE AND BOLDNESS". In the center appears the image of a helmeted soldier standing amidst the ruins of a fort, holding in his right hand an unsheathed sword, and in his left the staff of the enemy's flag, which he tramples underfoot.

On the reverse, again in Latin: "FORTIFICATIONS, MARSHES, ENEMIES OVERCOME". In the center the fortress at Stony Point is depicted with both turrets and a flag flying. At the base of the hill are two shore batteries, one of which is firing at one of six vessels on the Hudson River. Beneath the fort is the legend: "STONY POINT CARRIED BY STORM, JULY 15, 1779".

The de Fleury medal is a prized possession of members of the US Army Corps of Engineers. Having served with the Engineers for so much of his Career, and still in Command of Engineer units Pollmann received this recognition.

It was a very proud moment for Bob. This special medal is authorized for wear with his dress uniform. Unlike most military medals, the de Fleury doesn't have a ribbon that is only worn, just the full neck pendant.



When Pollmann assumed Group Command of Headquarters, 644th Area Support Group his job provides command and control of four Battalions with companies in three states. The commander delegates many important tasks, such as personnel administration, operations, and supply to a group of staff officers who report directly to him, and act on his behalf. This left him time to attend necessary briefings and the critical tasks of command. He remained as Group commander until October 2000.



Patch of the 88th Reserve Support Command (RSC), later Regional Readiness Command (RRC)

In October 2000, Colonel Pollmann became G-3 of the 88th Reserve Support Command at Fort Snelling Minnesota. As G-3, he was the officer in charge of Training and Operations for the Command. He oversaw operations including staff duties, exercise planning, training, operational requirements, combat development and tactical doctrine.

While with the 88th, Bob was coordinating efforts for units in Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, Michigan, Indiana, and Ohio. Following the terrorist attacks of September 11 2001, many of the units under Pollmann's charge began mobilizations to prepare for deployments.

starting his career as an enlisted soldier, he had risen to the rank of General Officer, a huge step. Along with the promotion, however, came a deployment to the Middle East in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

In July 2003, Pollmann was promoted to the rank of Brigadier General. After



Brigadier General

He assumed Command of the 420th Engineer Brigade based out of Bryan Texas. In December 2003 the reserve unit was activated for active duty service in Iraq.

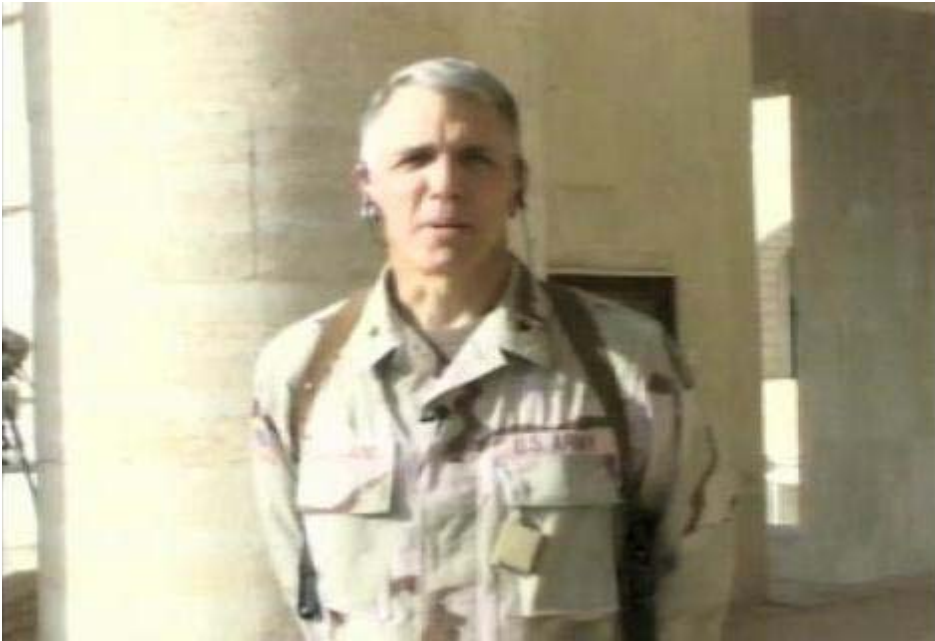


Initially, General Pollmann was in command of 2,600 reserve soldiers in the Brigade. When deployed,

Pollmann served in the dual-hatted position as the C7 (Engineer) on staff of the Commander-Multi National Corps - Iraq. He was in direct command of over 4,300 Joint Forces during the year long deployment in Iraq.

420th Engineer Brigade





While in Iraq, Pollmann and the 420th Brigade operated in the Samarra region on reconstruction efforts.

In mid 2003, Anti-Iraqi forces (AKA insurgents) had held the city in fear and held up most of the reconstruction efforts. With the help of the Iraqi forces, Soldiers & Police force, along with American troops, the anti-Iraqi forces were driven out and reconstruction efforts were able to resume.

Many basic services were destroyed in the insurgent attacks,

and the Samarran people were struggling with day to day life without the standard utility services we are used to in the United States. In an interview with the BBC General Pollmann noted that, "Samarrans have just shouted with joy as we move ahead with these projects." He noted that it appeared that the civilians in the city had no love for the insurgency, but were unable to drive them out on their own. The joint effort between the United States and Iraqi forces allowed the city to again live in relative peace as they moved forward.



**Combat Action Badge as awarded to General Robert Pollmann and members of the 420th Brigade for being engaged by the enemy while in Iraq. The Badge was not created until 2005, so they received them after their return.**

**It is awarded for being engaged in armed action with the enemy after 18 September 2001.**

The one year deployment allowed members of the 420th Engineer Brigade to help rebuild Iraqi infrastructure and basic needs after the fighting by Anti-Iraqi forces was quelled.

In October 2004 General Pollmann was awarded the Bronze Star by the Commander of III Corps.

**Bronze Star Medal as awarded to General Pollmann in 2004**



The Bronze Star medal is awarded to members of the military who performed heroic act, acts of merit or meritorious service while in a combat zone. Pollmann's award of the Bronze Star in recognition for his command service while on deployment in Iraq during their year long deployment. It is the fifth highest combat decoration in the Army.

Soon, the deployment was over and Pollmann returned home to Minnesota. On 10 July 2005 Pollmann became the Commanding General of the 88th Regional Readiness Command (RRC). While away from the 88th, the division was redesignated and changed from a Reserve Support Command to the Regional Readiness Command. He was based out of Fort Snelling Minnesota.

In August 2005 he was promoted to the Rank of Major General.





Major General

As Commander of the 88th RRC, he oversaw all aspects of the entire Division. This included Reserve troops from 6 states in the Mid-west. With the War on Terror a primary role of the Nation's National Defense, numerous units within Bob's command were activated for deployments.

In April 2008, Major General Pollmann had the bittersweet opportunity to award the Silver Star posthumously to a combat soldier from the War on Terror. Staff Sergeant Patrick Lybert quickly came to action during a fierce enemy attack on 21 June 2006, to help hold off the attack and allow other soldiers to recover, return fire, treat wounded, and call for indirect fire support. He was killed in action during the attack. Patrick was serving with the 10th Mountain Division in Afghanistan.

MG Pollmann handed the Silver Star to Patrick's Grandfather a Corporal who in turn presented it to his daughter and mother of Patrick. The Grandfather had presented Patrick with his Blue Infantry Cord upon his graduation from basic training at Fort Benning on Nov. 15, 2002, 50 years after the grandfather had served as an infantryman there.

During the Ceremony the crowd was told, "Patrick's actions on that day in June were those of honor, loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, integrity and personal courage . . . values that we as soldiers strive to live out everyday," said General Pollmann. "His were the actions of a hero exemplifying all that America has stood for and held dear since the birth of our nation."

"The Silver Star is reserved only for an elite few who epitomize these values no matter what the cost. First approved on July 19, 1932, the Silver Star is awarded for gallantry in action against an enemy of the United States, and of the 120,000 soldiers that have served in Afghanistan to date; only 101 have received the Silver Star." Explained Major General Pollmann who continued on to say:

"For SSG Patrick Lybert and for many others like him who have earned this prestigious award, we are unable to present it directly to them for their gallantry in action because they made the ultimate sacrifice . . . a sacrifice so great that it renders this medal as only a small token, but most importantly it represents a tremendous symbol of honor bestowed upon Patrick from a forever grateful nation."

It was an honor for MG Pollmann to be able to present the Silver Star for valor in memory of SSG Lybert's service.

In June 2008, Pollmann was once again recognized by the US Army Corps of Engineers when he was awarded the Silver de Fleury Medal. The second highest degree of the award, it was once again a highlight for MG Pollmann to receive. The Corps of Engineers made up a large part of his career, and to have been recognized for his service was a great honor for him.

In August 2008, Major General Robert A Pollmann retired from the US Army after over 37 years of service. He had the unique opportunity to lead troops from Platoon level thru division level during his service. His service is a huge source of pride for him, and he looks back on his years with the Army with fondness.

SSG Patrick Lybert





Over his years of service Pollmann was awarded the following medals and awards:

Army Distinguished Service Medal; Legion of Merit; Bronze Star; Meritorious Service Medal with 3 Oak Leaf Clusters; Army Commendation Medal; Army Achievement Medal with one Oak Leaf Cluster, Army Reserve Components Achievement Medal with one silver and one bronze Oak Leaf Cluster; National Defense Service Medal with two bronze stars; Iraq Campaign Medal with two stars;

Global War on Terrorism Service Medal; Humanitarian Service Medal; Armed Forces Reserve Medal with silver hourglass and "M" device; Army Service Ribbon; Army Overseas Ribbon; Reserve Components Overseas Training Ribbons with "2"; and the Joint Meritorious Unit Award. He was also awarded the Combat Action Badge, and the Bronze and the Silver de Fleury medals.



In November 2009 Major General (retired) Pollmann was the featured speaker for the Veteran's Day Observance in Willmar. Following his retirement from the Army, Bob continued to run MicroPure Filtration for a number of years. He eventually sold the company and retired. A licensed commercial pilot, he enjoys spending time flying and exercising.

He continues to live in a suburb west of Minneapolis.