

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



This issue of *The Tactical Edge* is dedicated to a legend in law enforcement, Ron McCarthy. To many of us, Ron was larger than life, and despite knowing he was experiencing some health issues, his passing last November was a shock. Ron will always be an iconic figure in the law enforcement tactical world, and his influence is both profound and everlasting. His impact was far-reaching and diverse. Ron was a master of tactics, leadership and character. His ability to envision future challenges was incredible. As the embodiment of character and competence,

it's not hard to understand why Ron was a mentor to so many in the tactical community, myself included.

I met Ron while teaching a less-lethal course along with my good friend Mike Finley from Dallas SWAT. Mike and I were looking over the roster before the beginning of the class and saw the name Ron McCarthy. We both took note of it and commented to one another that there was no way that could be *the* Ron McCarthy. After all, he had helped develop many of the tools and tactics we would be teaching. Why would he be here? Well, we began the class by calling roll, and sure enough, it was *the* Ron McCarthy. Mike and I panicked internally but pushed forward with teaching the curriculum. At the first break, Ron came up to us and introduced himself. He was very gracious and complimentary and did his best to put us at ease. Then, as he got ready to go back to his seat, he turned and said, "You guys know what you're talking about. Stop deferring to me." This was my first lesson in Ron's humility. Both Mike and I got to know Ron much better over the week, and a genuine friendship formed. For years to come I would learn so much more from him.

Ron loved everything about the law enforcement profession (maybe with the exception of the brass). The men and women in uniform were his favorite people. I experienced firsthand how dedicated he was to us all while teaching another less-lethal class in southern California. After class one day, Ron's son-in-law, Todd, invited me to dinner. When it was time to pay the bill, Todd picked up the tab. I respectfully protested and offered to at least pay my half. Todd refused despite my telling him that I received a per diem. Todd looked me straight in the eye and advised, "You don't understand. If I let you pay and Ron finds out, he's going to kick my a**!" Seeing the look on Todd's face told me he was dead serious. This is but one of many examples of Ron doing things for cops. Over the years, Ron dedicated himself to providing expert witness services to cops, often without any compensation. To him, it was just the right thing to do for those on the front lines.

Ron's friendship and mentorship will always mean the world to me. NTOA Director Emeritus Phil Hansen has written a poignant tribute to Ron on page 26 of this issue, and I hope you take the time to read about a truly exceptional gentleman who personified everything good and noble about the policing profession. God speed.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Thor Eells".

Thor Eells
Executive Director



RON WILL ALWAYS BE
AN ICONIC FIGURE IN
THE LAW ENFORCEMENT
TACTICAL WORLD, AND
HIS INFLUENCE IS
BOTH PROFOUND
AND EVERLASTING.