

(January 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020)

If you know someone who would benefit from being an Insider, feel free to forward this PDF to them so they can sign up [here](#).



Note: As an Insider, you can read all prior Insider newsletters [here](#).

## Quick Tips for our Insider friends!

Hey Insiders,

Happy New Year!

This newsletter is coming to you from Redmond, where we're home until the end of February, working hard on new content and enjoying the crisp, clear weather.

And in case you missed them, as a regular tradition I published my traditional end-of-year blog posts:

- [2019: the year in books](#)
- [2019 review: the year by the numbers](#)

## SQLskills News

**Live, IN-PERSON classes:** our Spring 2020 classes in Chicago are filling up:

- IEPTO1: Performance Tuning and Optimization – Part 1 – April 27-May 1
- IE0: Accidental/Junior DBA – April 27-29
- IECAG: Clustering and Availability Groups – April 30-May 1
- IEPTO2: Performance Tuning and Optimization – Part 2 – May 4-8
- IEAzure: Azure SQL Database, Azure VMs, Azure Managed Instance – May 4-7

We've also **added a new IEReporting** Immersion Event on Using and Administering SSRS and Power BI, running April 27-28 and with a US\$100 discount through 1/25/20!

You can get all the details and registration information through the class schedule page [here](#).

**SQLBits:** Kimberly, Erin, and I will all be presenting at [SQLBits](#) in London in March. Our precons are:

- Me: 3/31 [Performance Troubleshooting using Waits and Latches](#)
- Erin: 4/1 [Performance Tuning with Query Store in SQL Server and Azure](#)
- Kimberly: 4/1 [Statistics4Performance: Internals, Analysis, Problem Solving](#)

This is the only chance to see us in Europe this year as we won't be bringing classes back to the UK until 2021. We hope to see you at SQLBits!

**Finally, even if you can't join us in person**, I've put out a call for **remote user group sessions for 2020!** If you'd like one of us to present for your user group, check out my blog post [here](#).

### **Book Review**

One of the books I've read recently is Tana French's [In the Woods](#). This is the first in a series of novels about crimes investigated by the (fictional) Irish police Murder Squad in Dublin, and was great for me as I know all the areas where it was set, having spent several months altogether in Dublin over the last ten years. The detective narrating the story was the sole survivor of an incident 20 years ago where his two best friends were murdered and he was found in the local wood with no memory of what happened. Now a young girl has been murdered in the same place, and the case has links back to that time. It's very well written and a page turner. I'm already looking forward to reading the next one. Highly recommended!

### **The Curious Case of...**

*This section of the newsletter explains recent problems we've helped with on client systems; they might be something you're experiencing too.*

I had an email question last week from someone who was very concerned to see a truncated log file after a revert from snapshot. They thought they'd come across a SQL Server bug and wanted to know if I'd seen this before. Check out my answer [here](#)...

### **Ponderings...**

*(This editorial is adapted from my traditional first-newsletter-of-the-year editorial that I've been doing since 2014.)*

At the start of every New Year it's always tempting to come up with a series of resolutions about things you're going to start doing, and it's tempting for me to write an editorial about planning to do new things. It's really easy to come up with ideas for cool things to *start* doing, which is why it's the easy route to take at the start of a new year.

But before you go too crazy with new ideas, consider a post mortem of your goals and plans from 2019. Look back at the year and see what didn't go well, and then figure out how to improve on those things. In my opinion, that's going to have a more positive effect on your life than continuing to do poorly on those things, and also try to add new things as well. (From 2014 to 2016, Kimberly commented "*the SQL development team could learn from this too...*", but with SQL Server 2016 and later versions, they really have been going back and fixing a bunch of things that were broken or outdated.)

During 2015, one of the things I had reinforced through the year while I mentored folks in the SQL community is that \*everyone\* has something with which they need help or advice, and I continue to swap emails with a few mentees when they ask for advice (in the years since 2015). I strongly advise you to get a mentor outside your management chain (and preferably outside your company) – someone to whom you can bounce questions and one that has no vested interest – other than just helping you out.

And I'm not just talking about things in your work life; I'm also talking about things in your personal life. Here are some examples of things to think about and consider improving upon for 2020:

- Your work/life balance
- The support your immediate manager gave you
- Your interactions with some of your colleagues
- Your interest in some aspects of your job
- Your career/skills development
- Resistance to change
- Keeping on top of performance fires
- Keeping track of goals and to-do lists
- Saying 'no' when you're already overloaded
- Accepting a poor status quo at work instead of looking for a better job
- Finding time for disaster recovery planning/testing
- Finding time for all the little things that it's easy to procrastinate about
- Finding time for your hobbies
- Finding time and motivation to become/stay healthy
- Keeping in touch with old friends and distant family
- Finding time to read some books or learn something new that's non-work
- Your work/life balance (again, because it's \*so\* important)

All of these can cause significant amounts of stress, so fixing them should be the first priority. Only once you have these items fixed, should you embark upon new and additional goals!

*(Kimberly added: And, don't get us wrong, this is just as hard for us as it is for you! And we both failed miserably at a couple of our goals too. But, we just have to look back and see why – and work to make it better from here. No reason to dwell, only to improve!)*

**Call to action:** Before you set cool, new goals for 2020 (whether at work or at home), do a post-mortem and work to fix the stuff from 2019 that was broken or didn't go so well. Not only will it feel good but it'll also reduce stress. And try to get a mentor!

## **#TBT**

*(Turn Back Time...) Blog posts we've published since the previous newsletter plus some older resources we've referred to recently that you may find useful.*

The theme for the TBT this time is on-disk structures:

- Kimberly's Pluralsight course: [SQL Server: Why Physical Database Design Matters](#)
- Kimberly's Pluralsight course: [SQL Server: Indexing for Performance](#) (which goes into lots of detail on index structures)
- Paul's blog posts on the basics:
  - [Inside the Storage Engine: Anatomy of a record](#)
  - [Inside the Storage Engine: Anatomy of a page](#)
  - [Inside the Storage Engine: Anatomy of an extent](#)
  - [Inside the Storage Engine: IAM pages, IAM chains, and allocation units](#)
  - [Inside The Storage Engine: GAM, SGAM, PFS and other allocation maps](#)
- Paul's blog post categories:
  - [Inside the Storage Engine](#)
  - [On-disk Structures](#)

Here are the blog posts we've published since the last newsletter:

- Paul: [2019: the year in books](#)
- Paul: [2019 review: the year by the numbers](#)
- Paul: [Wait statistics workshop at SQLBits in London 2020 – finally!](#)
- Erin: [Query Store Training: SQLBits 2020](#)
- Tim: [Pluralsight Courses](#)
- Jonathan: [Fixing A previous restore operation was interrupted and did not complete processing](#)

I hope you find these useful and interesting!

## **Video Demo**

The demo this time is from Jonathan's new Pluralsight course [SQL Server: Using SentryOne Plan Explorer](#) and he shows how to use the 'what if?' index analysis part of the popular free tool.

The video is just over 5 minutes long and you can get it [here](#).

Enjoy!

## Upcoming SQLskills Events

Our Spring 2020 classes are all open for registration!

You have multiple learning opportunities as every event has a different focus as well as different benefits – from deep-technical training in our Immersion Events to wide-ranging topics at SQLintersection where you can learn more effectively how to keep moving forward in both your environment and your career! And, of course, one benefit you'll always get from in-person events is networking; we hope to meet/see you at an event soon!

To help your boss understand the importance of focused, technical training, we've also added a few items to help you justify spending your training dollars with us:

- [Letter to your boss explaining why SQLskills training is worthwhile](#)
- [So why do you want to come to our training? And the winners are...](#)
- [Community blog posts about our classes](#)
- [Immersion Event FAQ](#)

### **LIVE, IN-PERSON Immersion Events:**

Chicago, IL, Spring 2020

- **IEPTO1:** Immersion Event on Performance Tuning and Optimization – Part 1
  - April 27 – May 1
- **IEReporting:** Immersion Event on Using and Administering SSRS and Power BI
  - April 27-28 **\*\* NEW and US\$100 off through 1/25/20 \*\***
- **IE0:** Immersion Event for the Junior/Accidental DBA
  - April 27-29
- **IECAG:** Immersion Event on Clustering and Availability Groups
  - April 30 – May 1
- **IEPTO2:** Immersion Event on Performance Tuning and Optimization – Part 2
  - May 4-8
- **IEAzure:** Immersion Event on Azure SQL Database, Azure VMs, and Azure Managed Instance
  - May 4-7

### **LIVE, ONLINE Immersion Events:**

- More coming in 2020!

Click [here](#) for the main Immersion Event Calendar page that allows you to drill through to each class for more details and registration links.

## **Summary**

We hope you've enjoyed this issue - we really enjoy putting these together.

If there is anything else you're interested in, we'd love to hear from you - [drop us a line](#).

Thanks,

Paul and Kimberly

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