

(April 14th, 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,

This newsletter is coming to you from Redmond, where we're still hunkered down for an extended period of social distancing. Tim and I are helping people out using our five 3D printers to make mask straps that take pressure off of ears – see [here](#). I hope you all stay safe and healthy!

Recordings of our live, online classes are available to buy, and we have a **special discount for new clients through April 30** – all the details are below!

Big news: Pluralsight is free during April – check out our 65 SQL Server courses!

SQLskills News

Online class recordings: you can buy recordings of all our online classes, for as little as US\$299 each. See [here](#) for all the details.

New client discount: we've dropped the price of our health check to US\$2,495 for all new clients between now and the end of April. Send us an email [here](#) for more details

Live, IN-PERSON classes: our Chicago classes have moved to October:

- IEPTO1: Performance Tuning and Optimization, Part 1 – October 19-23
- IE0: Accidental/Junior DBA – October 21-23
- IECAG: Clustering and Availability Groups – October 19-20
- IEReporting: Using and Administering SSRS/PowerBI – October 21-22
- IEPTO2: Performance Tuning and Optimization, Part 2 – October 26-30
- IEAzure: Azure SQL DB, Azure VMs, Azure Managed Instance – October 26-29

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

SQLBits: Kimberly, Erin, and I will all hopefully be presenting at [SQLBits](#) in London in September. Our precon are:

- Paul: [Performance Troubleshooting using Waits and Latches](#) SOLD OUT!!
- Erin: [Performance Tuning with Query Store in SQL Server and Azure](#)
- Kimberly: [Statistics4Performance: Internals, Analysis, Problem Solving](#)

SQLintersection: The Spring show has been canceled and everything has moved to the Fall show in Las Vegas in December. More details here nearer the time.

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

From the archives: Back in 2013 I read Abraham Verghese's [Cutting for Stone](#). Wonderful book! Hard to describe the plot without giving away what happens in the book. It's written by a surgeon, with lots of factually accurate descriptions of surgeries and medical issues and it follows the life of a family in Addis Ababa in the '60s and '70s, with drama and betrayals. Masterfully written, became a two-day page-turner for me after dithering about buying it since it came out. Very strongly 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.

Last week someone asked me why their log wouldn't clear and the `log_reuse_wait_desc` in `sys.databases` said `REPLICATION`, even though there was no replication configured at all. I already had a post on that, so you can read through my explanation [here](#)...

Ponderings...

(From Jon this time – enjoy!)

I started getting active in the SQL Server community in January 2007 as a result of having a question that I asked on the MSDN SQL Server forums to try and get some help with what I thought might be a bug in SQL Server 2005 at the time. While I was there I read some other unanswered questions and a few I could answer immediately, but a few caused me to have to do some more digging and expand my own understanding of SQL Server, and I was hooked.

For a period of about a year, I was the top answerer of questions on the SQL Server forums as well as the top answerer across all of MSDN for multiple months. Back then, there was a strong growing community of SQL Server professionals that were really out to help other people with problems.

Fast forward just a few short years, and the dynamic started to change. The forums started to be tracked as a metric internally by Microsoft and contingent staff were hired to respond to questions but also to close them by marking responses as answers even when that might not have been the case. This started to lead to the “gamification” of the system by some with a different agenda, to become a Microsoft MVP.

The MVP Award is a great recognition by Microsoft for community contribution, but the interesting thing I noted was that those actively seeking it, often didn't necessarily end up awarded and those not seeking it tended to be recognized and awarded. Other mediums like StackOverflow were expanding and becoming more popular and the shift in quality of content ultimately led me to pursue alternative routes for contributions, mainly blogging and speaking.

I was honored to be recognized as a Microsoft MVP for over a decade, but as time passed my life changed and eventually my contributions to the community fell off to the point where I was no longer recognized by Microsoft as an MVP. To be honest, I was always surprised to find out I had been re-awarded by Microsoft and never felt like I was entitled to the recognition.

This however, has not been the case for everyone that Microsoft recognized over the years, and there have been a few blog posts over time by different MVP's (usually not SQL Server) that flamed Microsoft for not being renewed/re-awarded. To me these people had the wrong motivations or intentions in their contributions. The interesting thing to me is that there are still some of those same people working to game the system and get recognized as an MVP.

For me, contributing to the community has never been about getting recognition or finding a way to make money off of the community, though I do recognize that as a consultant with SQLskills, my contributions do bring recognition to my employer and draw traffic to our website.

However, I contributed to the community for years on SQLBlog.com and through the forums because I wanted to know more and I enjoyed answering questions and educating. These were the attributes that got Paul's attention back in 2007 and ultimately led him to hire me as the first full-time consulting employee at SQLskills.

To this day I still help people regularly by email for free (I don't respond with a templated answer that directs you to a forum or try to build a consulting gig out of basic questions), I still present online and in person sessions for SQL conferences and user groups, and I still blog and write articles online with free technical information. However, my kids have always been my number one priority and they're getting older and busier, and so am I, so where I spend my time giving back has changed.

Call to action: at times like this, with huge amounts of change happening in life, it can be interesting to look back on life and see how things you've done have changed. Change is inevitable, so don't be afraid to realize you've changed.

#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.

Wait stats are the theme for #TBT this time. Here are some wait statistics resources for you:

- My Pluralsight: [SQL Server: Performance Troubleshooting Using Wait Statistics](#), that has 4.5 hours covering waits, latches, and spinlocks (free all through April)
- My main post about [wait statistics](#)
- My [wait stats library](#) with info on more than 360 wait types
- The [introductory whitepaper](#) Jonathan and Erin wrote
- Microsoft whitepapers on [latches](#) and [spinlocks](#) I helped with
- My three blog post series on [waits](#), [latches](#), and [spinlocks](#)
- Our articles on SentryOne's [sqlperformance.com](#) about wait statistics

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

- Paul: [3D printing to help healthcare workers](#)
- Erin: [An approach to index tuning – Part 2](#)
- (and if you missed it last time...) Erin: [An approach to index tuning – Part 1](#)

I hope you find these useful and interesting!

Video Demo

In this Insider video, Tim walks you through new hardware options for Azure SQL Database. Some customers have a more CPU bound workload that could benefit from faster CPU clock speeds, and many customers could benefit from a higher memory-to-vCore ratio. Microsoft has now provided a compute-optimized hardware configuration option for the general purpose tier and a memory-optimized hardware configuration option for the business critical tier. In this demo, Tim walks you through where to find this new preview feature and the resource limits.

The video is around 4 minutes long and you can get it in WMV format [here](#).

Enjoy!

Upcoming SQLskills Events

Our 2020 classes have moved to October and 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 a more broad set of topics at SQLBits / SQLintersection! 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, Fall 2020

- **IEPTO1:** Immersion Event on Performance Tuning and Optimization – Part 1
 - October 19-23
- **IEReporting:** Immersion Event on Using and Administering SSRS and Power BI
 - October 21-22
- **IE0:** Immersion Event for the Junior/Accidental DBA
 - October 21-23
- **IECAG:** Immersion Event on Clustering and Availability Groups
 - October 19-20
- **IEPTO2:** Immersion Event on Performance Tuning and Optimization – Part 2
 - October 26-30
- **IEAzure:** Immersion Event on Azure SQL Database, Azure VMs, and Azure Managed Instance
 - October 26-29

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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