(May 12th, 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 into our third month of social distancing. Tim and I are still helping people out using our six 3D printers to make mask straps that take pressure off of ears (see here) we've printed and shipped/donated more than ten thousand between us so far (and we have another three thousand requests we're working on still). We figure we'll be printing these through the end of the year.

Many thanks to random community members who've PayPal-donated towards costs, as well as the $500 each that RedGate donated. If you know anyone who could use some free straps, hit me or Tim up in email – don't be shy – I ship in units of 10s and 100s and I'm taking requests for shipments in the first week of June.

And we also created a SQL Server 3D Printing Facebook group – check it out here.

I hope you all stay safe and healthy!

SQLskills News

Kandio job candidate assessments: we've teamed up with Kandio to produce technical assessments to help companies screen candidates for job recruitment. If you want to make sure someone really knows what they say they know, check out the assessments here.

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.

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.

EIGHTKB: Erin is presenting as part of a free, online conference on SQL Server internals on June 17th – check out the details here.

SQLBits: Kimberly, Erin, and I will all hopefully be presenting at SQLBits in London in September. Our precons 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 2016 I read Peter Frankopan's *The Silk Roads: A New History of the World*. This is a very interesting book tracing the varied history of the countries along the Silk Road, including empires, explorers, and religions that affected the various routes. A lot of what's in the book I already knew, but having it all presented in one volume in a chronological sequence was excellent. The last 100 pages or so detailed the quite despicable British and American machinations around the countries in the Middle East for their own (mostly oil-related) gains, to the huge detriment of the native populations, which I felt quite ashamed to read about, being of both nationalities. Highly recommended for history fans!

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 whether they should pay attention to the extent scan fragmentation metric in the old *DBCC SHOWCONTIG*. You can read through my explanation here…

Ponderings…

(From Tim this time – enjoy!)

With many places in the world still in lockdown or in quarantine, many people are having a hard time adjusting to the isolation. An abrupt change from working in an office space with other humans to working-from-home is a big change in itself. Prior to the pandemic, working from

home already came with a bit of isolation from not having office mates, but you could still go out for lunch, shopping, or any number of things to see other people. Now, interaction in public is scary and at best is with social distancing and wearing a mask.

I've also seen tweets and Facebook posts about numerous people being laid off during the pandemic. Thankfully, in each case I have seen, the individual was able to quickly locate new employment and credited the SQL Community for helping them land the new job. Our community is strong and resourceful, and I think we can each try to help our community more.

Let me explain…

While there have been some amazing things happening with helping people connect for employment, I have seen a lot of posts about depression and general feelings of loneliness. Sure, many of us talk to people during work conference calls, but that is not the same as a good quality random conversation you may have previously had in person at work.

I'm proposing that we as a community can do something to help cope with this: make an effort to reach out to at least 3 people you haven't talked to in a while and let them know you were thinking about them.

I was chatting with Steve Jones the other day and he mentioned that every couple of days he reaches out to 2-3 people just to keep in touch. This can be anyone; maybe an old friend from high school, a former co-worker, or someone in our SQL Community. Brighten someone's day by reaching out with an email, text, tweet, or any other of the numerous methods available to communicate.

Taking care of your mental health is important. Keep busy to keep you focused on things that bring you joy. Gardening, reading books, or just about anything other than staying glued to your TV or computer watching the news. Several of us in the SQL Community have turned to 3D printing 'personal protective equipment – PPE' to keep busy and to be help the medical community during this time. Others are making cloth masks. Whatever you are doing, I encourage you to take care of yourself and to try to reach out to a few extra people per week to let them know you care about them. Such a small gesture can completely turn someone's day around.

#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 transaction log is the theme for #TBT this time. Here are some transaction log resources for you:

- My 8-hour Pluralsight courses: *SQL Server: Logging, Recovery, and the Transaction Log*
- My *transaction log blog category*
- My *sqlperformance.com blog posts* on transaction log configuration and performance troubleshooting
- Kimberly's post on *VLF sizing*
- My TechNet Magazine article on *Understanding Logging and Recovery in SQL Server* (the formatting is messed up a bit on that web page)
- The *WRITELOG* page from my waits library

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

- Erin: *Capturing DBCC CHECKDB Output*
- Erin: *Working From Home with Kids: 7 Weeks In*
- Erin: *Troubleshooting Performance in Azure SQL*
- Tim: *Updated Azure SQL Database Tier Options*

I hope you find these useful and interesting!

Video Demo

In this video, Jonathan takes a look at the latest release of SentryOne Plan Explorer and the tipping point functionality that has been added to the Index Analysis tab, for understanding potential tipping points for query plan changes.

The video is around 6 minutes long and you can get it in WMV format here.

And the demo code is 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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