

(August 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023)

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!**

This newsletter comes to you from Camp Savage, where the summer season is in full swing and landscaping work progresses well.

We hope you're all enjoying summer and are starting to think about your Fall plans, possibly even those that will keep you moving forward and never stop learning!

### **Blackbelt Base Camp**

We know that finding time for training is difficult in and of itself. Add “recorded courses” and some people just can’t stay motivated. Or, their offices don’t give them time. Or, you think, you’ll have lingering questions that will go unanswered. Or, there’s just no schedule or forcing factor to keep you going (ok, the badges are cool but you still have to be motivated to finish the courses). And, it’s not just about \*finishing\* the courses; it’s about LEARNING.

So, we’ve come up with a plan to help you! We’re calling it Blackbelt Base Camp – Class of 2024. Starting in October 2023 and running through May 2024, we will have required course materials each week to review. Each week will represent roughly 1 full day of training. We recommend that you set aside 2 hours per day (same time every day or you pick!). But, we want you to **BLOCK IT ON YOUR CALENDAR**. We want you to get sign-off from your manager. We want you to be able to **LEARN** – effectively. If you’re constantly being interrupted, you won’t retain the content. However, if you can focus – for just 2 hours a day – you can truly absorb the content and help make it stick! Furthermore, at the end of each course, we will have an open Q&A with at least 2 SMEs (Subject Matter Experts) on hand to cover any of your remaining questions!

The full schedule is [here](#).

As further incentive, here are some even deeper discounts **ONLY** for you (our newsletter subscribers)!

- Blackbelt Bundle for 1 year of access
  - Regular price: \$2,495.00 (beginning September 1, 2023)
  - Early-bird price: \$1,995.00 (for the month of August)

- Newsletter subscriber discount code: **BBNews** for an additional 10% savings (\$200 off): \$1,795.00 (available until EOD August, 15, 2023)
- Blackbelt Bundle with NO EXPIRATION DATE (lifetime access)
  - Regular price: \$3,995.00 (beginning September 1, 2023)
  - Early-bird price: \$3,495.00 (for the month of August)
  - Newsletter subscriber discount code: **BBLifetime** for an additional 15% savings (\$525 off): \$2,895.00 (available until EOD August, 15, 2023)

We look forward to helping you get to Base Camp, get your Blackbelt, and improve your SQL skills!

### **Covid Strikes Again**

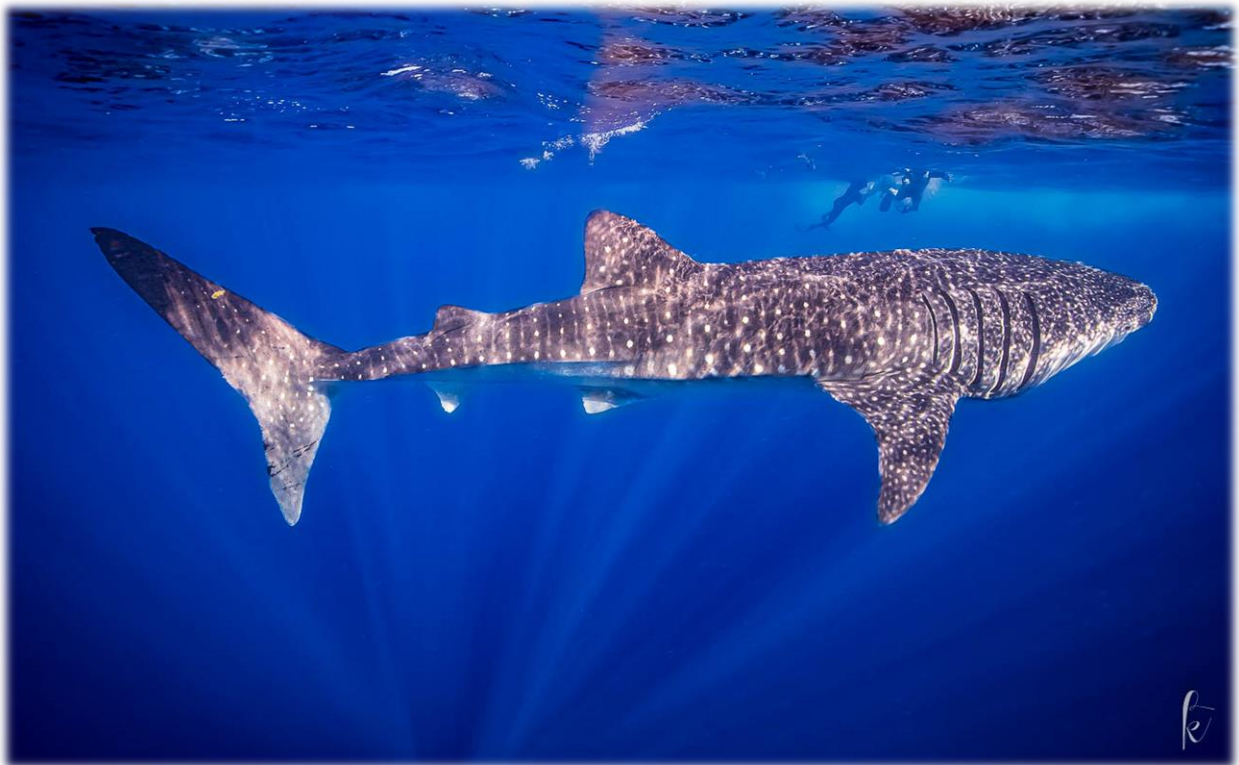
Kimberly was enjoying some travel adventures to check off a couple of bucket list items (whale shark aggregations in Isla Mujeres [Cancun] as well as mobula aggregations in the Sea of Cortez [outside of LaPaz]) in what she thought (*wishful thinking*) was a post-Covid world... and caught Covid (again). This was her second time and despite being around each other for a couple of days before she had symptoms, I didn't catch it and she went back to our place in Redmond to isolate. The long story short is that she's much better but this second bout with Covid really hit her hard, much harder than the first time (she is vaxxed and current with the booster). Above all, she just wanted me to mention a reminder for all of you to stay safe! Covid is still out there, and it still stinks! Despite all of us backing off a lot of covid protocols (masks are gone; places don't require 6-foot spacing, etc...), it's probably still a good idea to carry some hand sanitizer and wash those hands and faces more frequently. I know that both of us are doing a bit more than we were at the beginning of summer. **Just stay safe everyone!**

And, just an FYI – she doesn't regret the travels and still has a few more trips planned. She got a few amazing shots on her trips. Check out her [insta](#) for more photos:

Mobula Munkiana Aggregation



Whale Sharks off Isla Mujeres





And if that fish looks big, it is! Whale sharks are the LARGEST fish in the sea! Yes, whales (mammals), are larger but as far as fish go, the whale shark is the biggest fish in the sea. The next closest is the basking shark. After that is the great white and then the tiger shark! Kimberly does love her sharks. So, one more shot: this time of Emma – a well-known tiger shark in the Bahamas that's been studied for the last 20+ years!

Emma – a Gorgeous Tiger Shark from Tiger Beach (the Bahamas)



As always, take care and be safe! And, if you want to safely dive with sharks, email Kimberly, she'll set you up! 😊

### **PASS Data Community Summit 2023**

Kimberly will be presenting at PASS this year and on November 14<sup>th</sup> she'll be presenting a pre-con workshop: *Queries Gone Wrong: Caching, Statistics, Cardinality -> Solutions!* Check out the details on the PASS website [here](#).

### **Book Review**

The latest book I've read is Laura J. Snyder's [\*The Philosophical Breakfast Club: Four Remarkable Friends Who Transformed Science and Changed the World\*](#). This hugely interesting book recounts the lives and work of Charles Babbage, John Herschel, William Whewell, and

Richard Jones; four lifelong friends who met as students at Cambridge University in the early 1800s and fomented a new scientific revolution on Baconian principles. From Amazon: "Historian of science and philosopher Laura J. Snyder exposes the political passions, religious impulses, friendships, rivalries, and love of knowledge—and power—that drove these extraordinary men. Whewell (who not only invented the word “scientist,” but also founded the fields of crystallography, mathematical economics, and the science of tides), Babbage (a mathematical genius who invented the modern computer), Herschel (who mapped the skies of the Southern Hemisphere and contributed to the invention of photography), and Jones (a curate who shaped the science of economics) were at the vanguard of the modernization of science." Highly recommended!

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

*This section of the newsletter explains recent problems we've helped with on client systems or been asked about over email or #sqlhelp; they might be something you're experiencing too.*

Occasionally we're contacted for help after a ransomware attack corrupts SQL Server data files. Is the situation recoverable? You can read through my explanation [here](#)...

### **Ponderings...**

*A brand new Ponderings for you this time... enjoy!*

Sometimes you have to have confidence in your abilities, or be confident that you're able to learn a new process without messing something up. But that is easier said than done. Here's a story...

As you all know, Kimberly and I are planning our eventual off-grid property that we call Camp Savage. It's forestland so we have acquired a variety of power equipment, including my beloved Fiona, the Kubota B26 TLB (tractor-loader-backhoe) to help manage it. I also used to have a similar tractor more than 17 years ago, before Kimberly and I even me, but I never altered it or did anything but use it as delivered. Tractor operation I'm confident in, but over the last couple of months my confidence has been tested.

Last year Kimberly asked me to get a big chipper for converting our copious amount of branches from logging slash piles into wood chippings, which look nice in landscaping and is great for soil as the mulch breaks down over time, releasing nutrients slowly into the soil. So I bought a large chipper to run off of the tractor PTO (rear driveshaft, perpendicular to the rear axle and used for driving rear-mounted implements). It languished until this summer, when I finally built it.



That was the easy part. I'm very handy at putting things together and at fixing things, but I'm wary of taking things apart, especially very expensive things like a tractor. I hadn't done anything on a vehicle since doing car work (changing suspension parts, brake calipers, and so on) in the UK in the mid-late '90s.

To mate the chipper with the tractor, I had to install a three-point hitch, which connects to the rear implements and allows them to be lifted up and down by the rear hydraulic lift arms. Unfortunately, the dealer had not done the most difficult step: inserting a large rod through the tractor frame. To do so meant removing one of the 4-500lb rear wheels (heavy because they're 75% full of beet juice ballast).

A little trepidation here as I had to wheel be careful not to damage any of the studs or let the wheel fall over. Wheel #1 was no-go as the lug nuts were over-tight, and I didn't have a torque multiplier to break them loose (I do now!). I got wheel #2 off, using the backhoe stabilizer arm as a jack. The circled hole is where I had to thread the rod.





Now was the step I'd never done and had been dreading: removing the backhoe. The procedure is documented in the manual but was very much outside my sphere of experience, so I procrastinated for a few weeks. Eventually I forced myself to confront it, thinking I have Kubota insurance and I have mechanic friends up here if something goes wrong, and I knuckled down and got it off no problem in about ten minutes.





Building the three-point hitch and adding a quick-hitch adapter was no problem at all.





Then came the next thing I wasn't confident about: I thought I'd have to shorten the drive shaft that links the tractor to the chipper, involving measuring and cutting both halves of the sliding shaft. So I procrastinated about that for a couple of weeks. Finally I discovered that with the quick-hitch installed, the drive shaft worked perfectly as is and all my concern had been for naught. And last weekend, the chipper ran for the first time:



The moral of the story is that even though you may think you're not capable of a daunting task that's outside your area of expertise, by breaking things down into steps, learning how to do those steps, and then taking care to go slowly and methodically, you'll be amazed at what you can do.

**Call to action:** The key point is that EVERYONE starts with ZERO knowledge about EVERYTHING! Learning to do something takes time, patience, focus, and ultimately the training pays off in CONFIDENCE and SUCCESS! If you're rusty on your SQL skills, join us for our Base Camp Training Event and get your Blackbelt and boost your confidence and your career!

### **#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 TBT this time is around Query Store, all from Erin:

- Pluralsight course: [\*SQL Server: Introduction to Query Store\*](#)
- Post: [\*Why You Need Query Store, Part I: Historical Performance Data\*](#)
- Post: [\*Why You Need Query Store, Part II: Plan forcing\*](#)
- Post: [\*Why You Need Query Store, Part III: Proactively analyze your workload\*](#)
- [\*Query Store blog category\*](#)
- SQLPerformance post: [\*Wait Statistics and Query Store\*](#)
- SQLPerformance post: [\*Using DBCC CLONEDATABASE and Query Store for Testing\*](#)

I hope you find these useful and interesting!

### **Video Demo**

In this demo video, Jon continues the series on the Server Audit feature by diving deeper into audit filtering, and shows the nuances of how use an audit to filter on a specific action.

The video is 7.5 minutes long and you can get it in MP4 format [here](#).

The demo code is available [here](#).

Enjoy!

### **Upcoming SQLskills Events**

BlackBelt Base Camp – Starting in October 2023

PASS Data Community Summit in November 2023

SQLbits in 2024 (hopefully we'll join you there; that's our plan!)

We've decided to record SQL Server 2022 updates relevant to our class material rather than running full classes, as, to be honest, not much has changed in our space and 2022 focused a lot on Azure extensions.

With our new streaming system, you can now choose to attend a live, online event or purchase a recording to watch at your leisure, either individually or as part of a bundle. And all attendees of live events get lifetime access to the class recordings too!

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\*](#)
- [\*Community blog posts about our classes\*](#)



- [Immersion Event FAQ](#)

You can get all the details on our [training options page](#) or just go directly to our [shop](#).

### **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

[Paul@SQLskills.com](mailto:Paul@SQLskills.com) and [Kimberly@SQLskills.com](mailto:Kimberly@SQLskills.com)