

(July 7th, 2026)

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!

One of my favorite changes around living at Camp Savage is the noticeable absence of noise pollution. Yes, there's almost continual bird sounds from dawn to dusk but those are pleasant and most welcome. Noise pollution is a terrible tragedy in society, as far as I'm concerned, and something which many just accept as part of life, but I find it a jarring intrusion. The worst is probably dog barking from inconsiderate or oblivious people in the neighborhood, followed closely by landscapers using leaf blowers – cacophonous, evil things.

Why am I telling you this? Apart from joy and fulfillment at work, health, happiness, and so on, something I think you should strive for is a harmonious environment – you'll be amazed how your mental health improves! (More on this in the next newsletter I think...)

Summer Sale Time!

Our Summer Sale continues while people keep signing up to learn:

- **\$699 for one-year access**
- **\$1,299 for lifetime access**

More than 158 hours of incredible training – see our [shop](#) for details!

If you received an email from me back in March about an upgrade on your courses/bundles, that offer still holds – just [let me know](#)!

PASS Data Summit Workshop

I'm excited to be presenting at the Pass Summit in November! My pre-con workshop is my absolute favorite to teach *Performance Tuning with Waits and Latches* and I'll also be presenting a session on *Advanced Data Recovery Techniques*. Bonus is that I'll have Kimberly with me!

All the details are available on the [Pass Summit website](#). See you there!

Book Review

I've read/listened to 19 books since the last newsletter and here are two I'd like to recommend to you.

Firstly, Paul Strathern's [*Death in Florence: The Medici, Savonarola, and the Battle for the Soul of the Renaissance City*](#). I've read lots about Florence and the Medici, but nothing specifically about Savonarola, the fiery monk who was the nemesis of Lorenzo Medici, established the 'City of God' in Florence and inspired the Bonfire of the Vanities. Excellent book! Partial from Amazon: "Was this a simple clash of wills between a benign ruler and religious fanatic? Between secular pluralism and repressive extremism? In an exhilaratingly rich and deeply researched story, Paul Strathern reveals the paradoxes, self-doubts, and political compromises that made the battle for the soul of the Renaissance city one of the most complex and important moments in Western history."

Secondly, Isabella Tree's [*Wilding: The Return of Nature to a British Farm*](#). Charming book with a ton of interesting information, but what a palaver they went through! Absolutely mountains of red tape and community backlash to stop farming about 3,500 acres in England. Huge difference to the wildlife in the area, obviously but a very small bright spot overall unfortunately. Certainly reiterated our push to do as much as we can for wildlife at Camp Savage!

Ponderings...

(We're still heads-down moving and listing our house, so here's an editorial from 2018 that's still soooooo applicable – enjoy!)

Every so often I need to let off some steam about some of the email questions I'm sent (I get a bunch of SQL Server questions every week from random people across the world), where it's clear that the sender has done no research at all before sending me an email. It's pretty frustrating and it bugs me when people are lazy. Don't get me wrong, I like getting email questions as I like helping people out (and it sometimes leads to new business!), but I do expect some work to be done in advance of sending a question.

It all brings to mind a training course from my days at Microsoft called *Precision Questioning*. The course taught how to hone your questioning technique for maximum efficacy, saving time for the questioner and the person/group being questioned. It also stressed the need to do due diligence in trying to find the answer to your question before taking up someone else's time to help. I think something similar would be of great benefit to technical communities on the Internet where people ask questions.

So here are some quick guidelines for asking SQL Server questions I came up while writing this:

- State your problem as unambiguously as possible.

- State what research you've done before asking the question (this shows you've done due diligence). You could even say what you searched for on Google/Bing.
- State the SQL Server version/SP/CU/build you're using.
- State what you've done to try to alleviate your problem so far, if anything.
- Ideally, include all Transact-SQL code to reproduce the phenomena (or, at least the details of the schema, indexes, query, query plan etc.) – just use your best judgment and include these as an annotated/commented script.
- Include whatever results are pertinent.
- Try to anticipate what people would ask to get more information, and provide answers in your question.
- Say please and thank you.
- Don't demand urgent or immediate help – you're not entitled to anything.

Whatever your chosen method for asking, make sure you respond to those who respond to you. Nothing puts people off from answering questions more than a complete lack of any thanks, or response to a clarifying question. And it's just common courtesy (sadly lacking these days, especially in the relative anonymity of the internet).

And don't forget, this isn't just for asking questions online; these guidelines should help within your company as well.

Now, where can you ask your question online?

- Twitter, using the #sqlhelp hash tag (I'm not on Twitter/X any more so don't know if this still exists)
- Forums like on [SQL Server Central](#)
- MSDN's [SQL Server](#) forums
- [Stack Overflow](#) for general programming questions
- [Server Fault](#) for general admin questions
- Direct email to people

And a whole bunch of other places.

The more information you can provide, show you've tried on your own to find an answer, and are polite and grateful, the more likely you'll get useful answers quickly. And if you're sending direct email, you'd better do all of this if you want a reply.

To finish off, I leave you with a blog post I wrote three years ago today: [RTFM. No seriously, R.T.F.M. Then ask your question.](#)

Call to action: The next time you're stumped for an answer and you'd like some free help, post your question using one of the mechanisms I've described above. But make sure you've done due diligence in trying to find the answer first, phrase the questions coherently, and if you have space, explain how you've searched and give as many pertinent details as possible. You'll be amazed at the great help you can get online!

The Curious Case of...

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

It's amazing how the same questions come up again and again in cycles over the years. Last week was someone wanting to prove that a particular transaction rolled back after a failover. I wrote some code back in 2017 to show which transactions rolled back on a crash (which is essentially what a failover is as far as in-flight transactions are concerned). You can get the code and read through my explanation [here](#)...

#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

From Erin: When working with a customer last week I learned something new about the Query Wait Statistics report in Query Store, and I thought it worth sharing! Check out this week's video to see how to leverage this report to help you troubleshoot based on query wait information captured in Query Store.

The video is 12 minutes long and you can get it in MP4 format [here](#).

The demo code is [here](#).

Enjoy!

SQLskills Training

We have no plans for live, public classes in 2026, but we've already released two new courses this year! And of course, all our recorded courses from the last few years are still as relevant as ever.

To help your manager 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 manager explaining why SQLskills training is worthwhile](#)
- [Community blog posts about our classes](#)

You can get all the details in our [shop](#).

Summary

I hope you've enjoyed this issue – I really enjoy putting these together. If there's anything else you're interested in, I'd love to hear from you - [drop me a line](#).

Thanks,
Paul