An Awesome Day at SQL Saturday Redmond

Yesterday was SQL Saturday Redmond. It was a great day, I learned lots, met some great new people, and had a chance to catch up with some old friends. When most people hear about SQL Saturday for the first time, they probably think to themselves "spend all day on a Saturday in technical presentations", however SQL Saturday is much more than that. The presentations all all great, don't get me wrong here, but the biggest value that I see is in the people that you get to know, and the things you can learn from the vendors. There were at least 6 people that I know online through Twitter, Fitbit, LinkedIn and other online sites that I had the opportunity to meet in person for the first time this weekend.

Picture Credit: Thanks Jimmy May (@aspiringgeek)

The Venue

The Mixer is a venue provided by Microsoft on the Microsoft campus. It is an impressive location, and the building overlooks a Microsoft soccer field.

The Microsoft campus is certainly an impressive location. The Mixer is a location with 4 conference rooms, that allowed 4 tracks of sessions to be going at the same time.

PASS

It was great to finally meet Carmen Buchmann with PASS. She helped me with the details of getting the Bellingham SQL Server Users Group - PASS Chapter going. Just awesome to put a face and an in person conversation to the person on the other end of the so many email conversations. She provided me with some Best of PASS Summit 2014 recordings to share with the PASS Chapter. Thanks Carmen.

Sessions

There were many great sessions to choose from today. Here is the line up that I attended.

Tabular Models: Easier & Faster Than Cubes; Really? Presented by Paul Turley, and as usual when Paul presents it was a great session. I learned more about the "The Good, the Bad, the Ugly and the Beautiful" behind Microsoft BI Solutions.

RC, SI, and RCSI, Oh My! –We're off to see the Wizard -to understand how it all works. Presented by Arnie Rowland, another great presenter. This was a good refresher on several things, and I was able to get a better understanding of RCSI (Read Commited Snapshot Isolation) and how it uses TempDB.

Get Testing with tSQLt. Presented by Steve Jones of RedGate and SQL Server Central. This was a session that I had previously seen 2 or 3 years ago, and I can see that tSQLt has come along and improved since I first tried it out. This session has inspired me to give it another try.

Columnstore Indexes in SQL Server 2014: Flipping the DW Fast. Presented by Jimmy May. This was another great session, and I learned a few interesting things around Column Store indexes in SQL Server 2012 and 2014.

There were many other sessions that I wanted to attend, one of which was the **5+ Database Design Blunders and How To Avoid Them** by Karen Lopez, but she was presenting at the same time I was, so I wasn't able to see her session.

My Session

My session was at the end of the day, which meant that I had more time to think about my session, and more time to wonder "am I ready?". By the time the session started I think I was ready.

Picture Credit: Thanks Tom Roush (@GEEQL) for taking the photo and posting to twitter.

You can download the slides and sample TSQL code from my presentation here: JOINs.zip

The poster referenced in the presentation is available here: Poster Download

The Organizers

Russell Nebitt, Greg Larson, and all the volunteers made this event happen. Thanks to everyone involved for being part of this.

After Party

And finally after the event was over, some of the #sqlfamily, friends, speakers and volunteers had dinner together in Redmond.

Picture Credit: Thanks Jimmy May (@aspiringgeek) for having the waiter take this shot and posting to twitter.

I think that sums it up for the most part. It was a great day.

FitBit Stats: I walked 7451 steps (4.35 miles) on my treadmill at my walking desk while writing this post.