



NEWS

Something Awful Founder Richard 'Lowtax' Kyanka Dies At 45

Kyanka created the influential *Something Awful* website in 1999

By **Brian Ashcraft** Published November 11, 2021 | Comments (161)



Kyanka in a YouTube video uploaded on November 7, 2021. Screenshot: Gaming Garbage/YouTube

Update 11/11/2021 16:32 p.m. ET: A [GoFundMe](#) is collecting money to put toward the wellbeing of the three daughters Kyanka left behind. Here is the [corresponding thread on *Something Awful*](#). Original story continues below.

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Longtime *Something Awful* forum administrator Fragmaster [posted](#) that site founder Richard “Lowtax” Kyanka has died. “I guess I should preface this by saying this isn’t a joke especially since I’m posting for like the first time in 10 years or something, but I got the bad news today directly from Rich’s family,” wrote Fragmaster. “Lowtax has passed away.”

“I didn’t ask for details,” Fragmaster continued. “I don’t know details. I don’t know what the current opinion of Rich here is. Not here to answer questions, I’m sharing the news. I really hate to share this news. But there you go.”

Considering all the shit that *Something Awful* has gotten up to over the years, some have wondered if this were a hoax. “Is this for real?” wondered one forum member. Some expressed shock at the news, while others offered their condolences to his children.

Kyanka’s second wife, who posts on SA under the name LadyAmbien, has confirmed her husband’s death, in a very angry post about his treatment of her and their children.

Below is the SA admin’s eulogy for the site’s founder, which was originally posted in a thread titled “itt a tribute to our late founder, farewell, deer richard.”

In 1999, Kyanka created *Something Awful*, and today, it’s hard to understate the site’s influence. It also spawned endless, classic memes, such as, “All your base are belong to us,” and was even the launching pad for what became 4chan. Our colleagues at Gizmodo listed it at number 89 in the 100 websites that shaped the internet today, writing the following:

While *Something Awful* had its moments as a host for various bits of comedy, rants, and reviews, SA's community is its real legacy. From its forums, *Something Awful* members gave birth to the legend of Slenderman, an entire new genre of videos in Let's Plays, and thanks to offshoots like the Goonswarm, SA was indirectly responsible for some of the most massive (and costly) space battles ever witnessed in video game history. It was also, uh, actually awful.

“The *Something Awful* forums spawned a great many things in its multiple decades of existence,” said Fragmaster in his YouTube eulogy. “Some things horrible and unfortunate, many things just unintelligible and a huge waste of time. But ultimately, Rich created a community where interesting things happened and people connected.”

In October 2020, Kyanka sold the site, writing on Facebook, “I just signed away the rights to *Something Awful*, goodbye, good riddance.”

That same year, Kyanka was accused of assaulting his second wife in February 2020, and the specifics, in great detail, played out on the *Something Awful* forums. Motherboard reports that Kyanka pleaded guilty to a charge of disturbing the peace in later that fall, but the assault charge was dismissed. This wasn't the only time assault accusations were leveled against Kyanka: *Motherboard* also reports that in June 2020, police were called to a domestic violence dispute between Kyanka and his then-girlfriend. The police report stated that no arrest was made “due to conflicting statements and a lack of witnesses.”

“He was a complex man and it's devastating that there was so much potential there for a happier life if he tried to heal his demons and addictions successfully, and it ended like this,” LadyAmbien wrote on SA in another post, adding that “most humans are all not good or all bad.”

Richard Kyanka was 45 years old.

The [National Suicide Prevention Hotline](#) in the U.S. is available 24 hours a day at 1-800-273-8255. A list of international suicide hotlines can be found [here](#).

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