



Dexter Bernard Rivers

May 12, 1986 - July 14, 2025

Dexter Bernard "Dex" Rivers passed away unexpectedly on July 14, 2025, in Sanford, Florida, at the age of 39.

Dexter is survived by his mother, Melanie Dawkins of Sanford, Florida; his beloved wife, Sarah Rivers of Sanford; and their two children, Dexter "Lil Dex" Da Sequel Rivers and Zuri Danielle Rivers, also of Sanford. He is survived by his siblings: James Rivers (wife: Doria Rivers) of Sanford; Herschel Rivers of Sanford; Melanie Rivers of Sanford; Mitchell Dawkins (wife: Breanna Dawkins) of Michigan; Sade Ross (husband: Javorrye Ross) of Deltona, Florida; Shandy Dawkins (husband: Xavier Shannon) of Gainesville, Florida; Caleb Dawkins of Chicago, Illinois; and Joshua Dawkins (wife: Angel Dawkins) of Orlando, Florida. His special cousins: Mykal Kilgore (husband: Nathan) of New York. Alysha Graham (husband: Mike) of Orlando, Florida.

He was preceded in death by his father, Dr. Mitchell L. Dawkins Sr., of Winter Park, Florida.

Dexter was born on May 12, 1986, in Jacksonville, North Carolina, to Melanie Dawkins (Rivers). He graduated from Lyman High School in 2004 and went on to study Political Science. In 2004, Dexter joined the United States Marine Corps (USMC). While serving in Afghanistan in 2009, he met Sarah Johnson, who would become the love of his life. They married in 2011 in Las Vegas,

Nevada.

Dexter was a true entrepreneur, working a cross real estate investing, technology, and business, always exploring new opportunities. Together, he and Sarah welcomed two children, whom he loved deeply. His children remember him as a fun, supportive, and loving father who encouraged them to chase their dreams. He was accomplished in photography, comedy, and boxing, and he was always dreaming up new ventures. Dexter was known for his wit and dedication, his passion for politics, and his love of video games. He was an active member of the Dawkins Family Foundation and a devoted coach for various football and soccer teams in the Sanford community, even leading them to an undefeated season.

Cemetery Details

Florida National Cemetery

6502 SW 102nd Avenue
Bushnell, FL 33513

Previous Events

Memorial Service

JUL 21. 11:00 AM (ET)

Zanders Memorial Chapel
232 W. Michael Gladden Blvd.
Apopka, FL 32703
(407) 886-3388

Florida National Cemetery Burial

JUL 29. 11:00 AM (ET)

Florida National Cemetery
6502 SW 102nd Avenue
Bushnell, FL 33513

Tribute Wall

JC

“ I will never forget the look on Sarah's face when she told me about Dexter. We were in Afghanistan and her face was full of joy! Dexter was funny, charming and deeply in love with Sarah. I am so thankful that they had each other, and built the American dream together. I love you Dexter. You will be missed.



Jaime CastilloRaby - July 21, 2025 at 04:40 PM



“ A grove of 3 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Dexter Bernard Rivers.

July 21, 2025 at 04:32 PM

EM

“ We are deeply saddened to hear of Dexter's passing. It was just ahead of the July 4th holiday we shared the day with the family at the beach and had a great day of it! Dexter always had a smile on and a laugh to share. We were praying he could become flag football coach for our grandkids in the upcoming season. While we have only known the Rivers family a few years through our daughter they are a beautiful family. We are praying for Sarah and the kids to find comfort and peace and will be there to help them through. May the Lord carry Dexter in his arms through the gates of heaven, and may he know we all miss him so very much.
Ed & Gail McNeill

Ed Mcneill - July 16, 2025 at 12:03 PM

SR

I am so thankful we got to create those memories together!!! Thank You Ed and Gail for your support and love.

sarah rivers - July 18, 2025 at 07:06 AM

MS

“ *MONICA DENISE SCOTT lit a candle in memory of Dexter Bernard Rivers*



MONICA DENISE SCOTT - July 16, 2025 at 08:49 AM