

VESPER, WI, USA

U.S. Marines

**LCPL, B CO, 2D AA BN, (RCT-5, I MEF FWD), 2D MAR DIV, CAMP LEJEUNE, NC
BALAD, IRAQ 12/02/2006**

“He was a great guy once you got to know him”.. “He’d always have this imagination and made up new games”.. “It was his dream to go in the military”.. “Tillery was kind of quiet but really very polite compared to a lot of kids his age.”

Jesse graduated from Lincoln High School in Wisconsin Rapids in 2005. Brothers Jared and James were also in the Army; both served tours in Iraq.

“He idolized his older brothers, and for him to follow in his brothers’ footsteps, that was something that was hugely important to them,” Van Natta said.

Tillery was remembered for his love of reading, video games, his family and friends.

“He possessed tremendous contentment, commitment and hope,” Van Natta said.

Tillery’s uncle, the Rev. Rodney Collins, said his relatives were close.

“I have the highest love and honor for the family and also for Jesse,” he said.

He joined his unit in February before receiving his first combat deployment in September.

Richard Ryan, Tillery’s battalion chaplain, traveled from Iraq to attend the services. He said about 200 Marines from Tillery’s company are serving in Fallujah and wanted to attend the funeral.

During the services, Tillery’s family was presented with the Purple Heart and a certificate for Tillery’s honest and faithful service. Tillery had received the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal and the National Defense Medal before the service, according to the Department of Defense.

“What this family is giving to our country because they believe in our country and believe in freedom is what touched me more than anything this week,” Van Natta said.

Jesse died from wounds suffered while conducting combat operations in Al Anbar province, Iraq, on December 2nd 2006. He was 19 years old.

He is survived by his parents, Martin and Kathy, brothers, James and Jared, and sister, Joelle.

From “Fallen Heroes Project”