

Associated Press

The MTV cartoon "Beavis and Butt-head."

Cartoon blamed for fatal fire

MORaine, Ohio (AP) — The mother of a 5-year-old who started a fire that killed his younger sister blames the MTV cartoon "Beavis and Butt-head" for promoting burning as fun, a fire official said yesterday.

Fire Chief Harold Sigler said he wants the cable network to eliminate shows that might encourage playing with fire and would like to see violence on the show reduced.

"The mother is attributing the fact that he was fascinated with fire to the 'Beavis and Butt-head' segment where they are setting things on fire," he said.

The show features two teenagers who comment on rock videos and spend time burning and de-

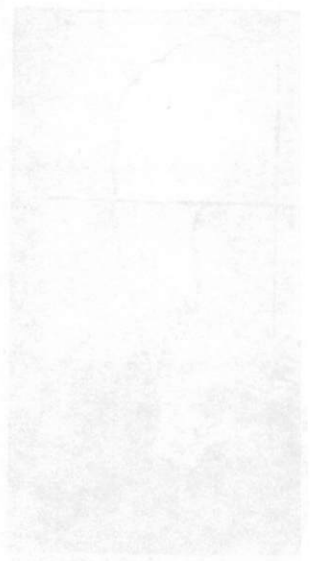
stroying things.

Austin Messner watched one show that had the cartoon characters saying fire is fun, Sigler said.

Carole Robinson, a spokeswoman for MTV, said the station will "re-examine issues regarding 'Beavis and Butt-head'" in the aftermath of the death.

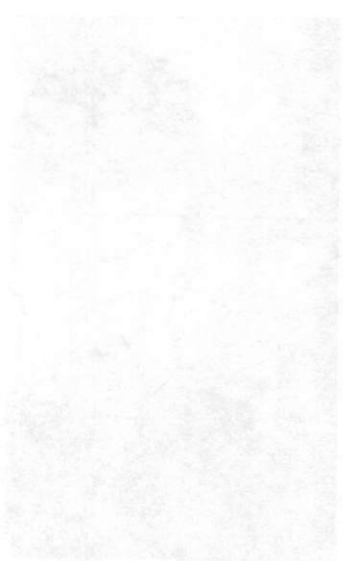
Firefighters were called to the family's mobile home park Wednesday in this suburban Dayton city in southwest Ohio after the boy set his bed on fire while playing with a cigarette lighter.

Austin and his mother, Darcy Burk, and her boyfriend, Steve Sears, escaped. His 2-year-old sister, Jessica Matthews, died in the fire.



Cartoon by [illegible]

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