

Bringing the lab to Carmichaels



CARMICHAELS - Josh Kelly, assistant environmental scientist/taxonomist of Wallace and Pancher Inc., Hermitage, recently spoke to more than 50 middle school and high school students at Carmichaels Area High School about careers in environmental fields.

Kelly, who was accompanied by Brett Bell, assistant environmental scientist/ laboratory technician, also addressed the role macroinvertebrate play in determining water quality pre/post mining, types of stream sampling methods and taxonomy.

"Josh Kelly essentially brought a Wallace and Pancher laboratory to Carmichaels," said Kevin Willis, Carmichaels Area science teacher. "He and Brett Bell walked the students through the process of water quality analysis from collecting a stream sample, to separating by species, to final identification using taxonomic techniques using actual specimens."

The students looked at macro-invertebrate under the microscope and used taxonomic keys to identify the insects to the genus level.

"I was impressed with how knowledgeable the students were and the fact that they were able to figure out what the insects were," Kelly said.

Willis said WPI has been asked to come back and make a presentation every year to the Carmichaels students.