



Noel is a dab hand

NOEL Burke, of Ballina, admits he's a hoarder – but it will be difficult for him to read about it.

Like the Wombles from the children's television show, Noel makes good use of the things that he finds – although he, until recently, has found it very difficult to read a newspaper story or even a classified ad.

Over six weeks or so, Noel has built himself a motorised pushbike using the frame of a West Coast Chopper pushbike and the motor from a pocket rocket mini motorbike.

And he got everything to put the bike together from the recycling centre at Ballina's tip. In his Barlows Road shed where he has just set up a business doing minor mechanical repairs, Noel has a gokart which he says really goes, and plenty of other bits and pieces.

Noel didn't do well at

school because he has never been able to read very well.

That has held him back in even searching for jobs as he couldn't read all the words in classified ads.

His poor reading skills have meant he has never been able to get a trade certificate and get permanent work. Last year, Noel had one of those moments in life when he was inspired to change.

He enrolled in a numeracy and literacy course with Nortec Employment and Training in Ballina.

He attended lessons for two days a week over a period of six months.

He said the course, with its one-on-one help, has made a significant difference in his life – now he can spell the names of vehicles and parts.

While he opened his business in December last year, he still doesn't have a trade qualification, but is offering to



RECYCLED MACHINE: Ballina's Noel Burke has built this motorised pushbike from recycled materials, at his Barlow Road workshop.

help local tinkerers with their projects or to complete minor repairs on engines, including mower

engines. For more information on the Nortec Employment and Training, phone 6686 8068.



SCHOLARSHIP W
(from left) Jack & Shannon Bell, Lau

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THE Combined Services Club Ballina has given seven local high school students financial leg-up for their studies.

The club last week presented seven Vi Pesce scholarships, which are worth \$1500 over two years, to several local high school