

From E-Waste to Empowerment: The Story of Nixbook OS

- **Speaker:** Mike Kelly
- **Room:** HC 108
- **Time:** Sun 3:00 pm – 3:30 pm
- **Format:** Lecture (30 Min + Q&A)
- **Difficulty:** Introductory
- **Track:** OSS Distributions
- **Additional Tags:** Sustainability & Funding
- **Presenter Location:** In-person
- **Experience:** several-th time speaking
- **At:** anywhere / at lfnw

Description:

What began as a small grassroots effort in Olympia, WA to keep old laptops out of landfills has grown into a community movement that has upcycled **over 1,000 computers** for people in need. This talk tells the story of how that project evolved into **Nixbook OS** — a custom Linux distribution built on NixOS and designed to make refurbished computers truly usable for anyone, including people who have never used Linux before.

Mike shares how Nixbook OS was engineered for **stability, simplicity, and zero-maintenance operation**, with sensible defaults and fully automatic updates that make the system effectively “bulletproof.” The talk explores what it takes to bridge the gap between open-source ideals and real-world accessibility, turning e-waste into opportunity and Linux into a tool for digital inclusion.

Attendees will leave inspired by how thoughtful system design, community action, and open-source principles can work together to make technology both sustainable and empowering.

Target Audience:

- Anyone passionate about upcycling
- Linux enthusiasts
- People interested in digital inclusion and sustainability

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