

Officials charge student spending Liberty Dollars

Uses private currency, faces theft charges

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A college student in Wisconsin faces charges of theft for "spending" three silver Liberty Dollars at two River Falls gasoline stations.

These private alternatives to Federal Reserve notes have been around since 1998. Bernard von NotHaus, who styles himself "monetary architect," created them. His company has issued them as paper notes and silver rounds from the beginning, and he has added gold, up to a face value of \$500, and now digital versions. The proper name for all pieces is "Liberties," he says.

Before launching Liberty Dollars, NotHaus was proprietor of the private Royal Hawaiian Mint for 25 years. In that time, the private mint produced 738 different collectible objects for which he is compiling a history and catalog, he said.

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