

The Free Lance-Star

Company says bare your BVDs

Unleash your undies on National Underwear Day

By **MARTY MORRISON**

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Retailer marks National Underwear Day Aug. 11

Prepare to uncover your unmentionables.

Come Wednesday, you can flaunt your Fruit of the Looms or show off your Victoria Secrets. Don't be shy, bare those BVDs.

It's all to celebrate the under-appreciated intimate apparel and usher in National Underwear Day.

OK, so you won't find it listed in Chase's Calendar of Events or highlighted on appointment calendars.

That's just a formality that an Internet underwear retailer hopes to resolve and make Aug. 11 an official holiday.

It's sending out 20 models in their skivvies to the Big Apple's midtown in honor of the occasion.

They'll solicit signatures in hopes of establishing a national holiday and survey passers-by on their undie-wearing habits.

And they're asking them to show off their shorts.

"Nobody talks about underwear," said Freshpair CEO Michael Butlein. "It's a \$13 billion business. We felt that underwear doesn't get the attention or respect it should."

There's nothing X-rated about the promotion--no thongs or jock straps--just good wholesome fun, Butlein insisted.

Just like last August at the event's unveiling.

"We were amazed at the response," Butlein said. "There was not one derogatory comment made. People couldn't stop smiling."

And they joined in the fun.

Sanitation workers held up traffic on Broadway while flashing their boxers. Women revealed bra straps and peeks of panties.



PRESS COVERAGE

The retailer already has 11,000 signatures. Butlein aims to present 50,000 names to his congressman, which he's sure will clinch a spot in the holiday observances.

Don't fret if you can't head to New York for the festivities. Just click on the Web site: freshpair.com. You can vote online and even take part in the survey.

Here's the skinny so far on the survey findings:

82 percent of women have tried on men's underwear.

31 percent of men have slipped into women's lingerie.

45 percent of men would like to wear G-strings but never have.

Married men change their underwear twice as often as single guys.

8 out of 10 women wear the wrong size bra.

10 percent of men prefer to wear no underwear at all. So do 7 percent of women.

31 percent of women prefer to wear thongs, 5 percent of men.

Underwear has come out of the closet in the last decade to make a visible fashion statement--from a Times Square billboard's briefly clad Calvin Klein models to thong-baring teen crooner Britney Spears.

From the political briefs: In 1992, then-Governor Bill Clinton divulged his preference for boxers over briefs in a famous MTV interview. A few years later, the president sparked an international scandal after White House intern Monica Lewinsky reportedly exposed her thong beneath her suit jacket.

Ponder this lesser-known trivia that freshpair.com has collected about what lies beneath:

King Tut was buried in 145 of his loincloths.

The first modern bra was created in 1913 when a New York socialite tied two handkerchiefs together with a ribbon. She was trying to cover the whalebone sticking out of her corset.

World War I soldiers were issued button-front shorts as underwear.

The first men's briefs were sold in Chicago with a Y-shaped front and overlapping fly on knitted drawers.

The average bra size in 1991 was 34B. Today it's 36C.

In France, lingerie takes up about 20 percent of the average woman's clothing budget.

To reach MARTY MORRISON: 540/374-5423 mmorrison@freelancestar.com