



Manhattan Public Library

2025 Year in Review

Annual Report

Connecting 54,700 neighbors with stories, learning, and community.

 629 Poyntz Ave, Manhattan KS, 66502 | mhklibrary.org | 785-776-4741

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Introduction

Founded in 1856, Manhattan Public Library has been a cornerstone of our community for nearly 170 years. Today, we continue that legacy as a premier resource anchor; a professional and accessible hub where 54,700 neighbors come to bridge the gap between curiosity and knowledge. Our mission is to provide more than just a collection of books; we provide a platform for personal growth, digital equity, and community connection.

As we reflect on 2025, we celebrate a year of high engagement and modern innovation. From the youngest learners discovering their first stories to professionals utilizing our various digital resources, the library remains a vital partner in Manhattan's success. This report highlights how we continue to adapt and remain a busy, welcoming destination for every resident.

Manhattan Public Library's mission is to enhance quality of life by connecting the community to information and innovation and providing a welcoming, safe, and fun place for all.

A Brief History



1856

Founding of
the Library

Before KS became a state, the first Manhattan Library Organization was formed. Membership cost was only \$1.00!



1904

Carnegie
Library Opens

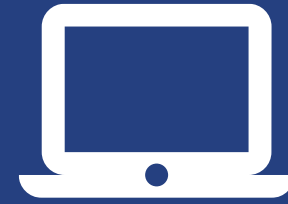
Thanks to the efforts of the MLA, the Carnegie Library was built and opened with a collection of 1,000 items.



1968

The BIG
Move

The new library building on the corner of Juliette and Poyntz Avenues opened. The collection size at the time was 55,000 items.



1989

The Online
Catalog Is Born

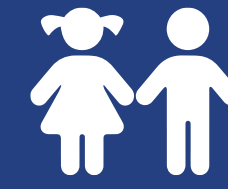
The traditional card catalog system is replaced.



1996-1998

Expansion
Galore

In 1996, our expansion began. By 1998, the new east wing opened and the Aesop's Fables Trellis by Kent Bloomer was unveiled



2012-2014

Think of the
Children

Launched in 2012, the "Building for Young Minds" campaign led to a doubling of children's space in 2014.



2020

Goodbye
Fines

In 2020 we launched our Fine-Free Policy.

2025 New Garden Area Completed

By repurposing the library's original entrance, we have breathed new life into an iconic architectural feature. We have transformed a once high-traffic threshold into a serene garden sanctuary, effectively expanding our outdoor amenities while honoring the building's heritage. This renovation was made possible by the 1998 Jack Goldstein Grant.

Reading & Discovery

If you look closely at our metrics, you'll see the fingerprints of our entire city. It's in the toddler finding their first favorite story and the entrepreneur researching their next big move. We provide the ink and the hours, but our residents provide the heart. This is what it looks like when our community decides that shared knowledge is the most valuable currency we have.



54,700

Residents in the Manhattan Area



414,743 Visits to the Library



30,743

Active Cardholders



643,697 Total Items Checked Out



3,796

Open hours in 2025

The Heart of the Library

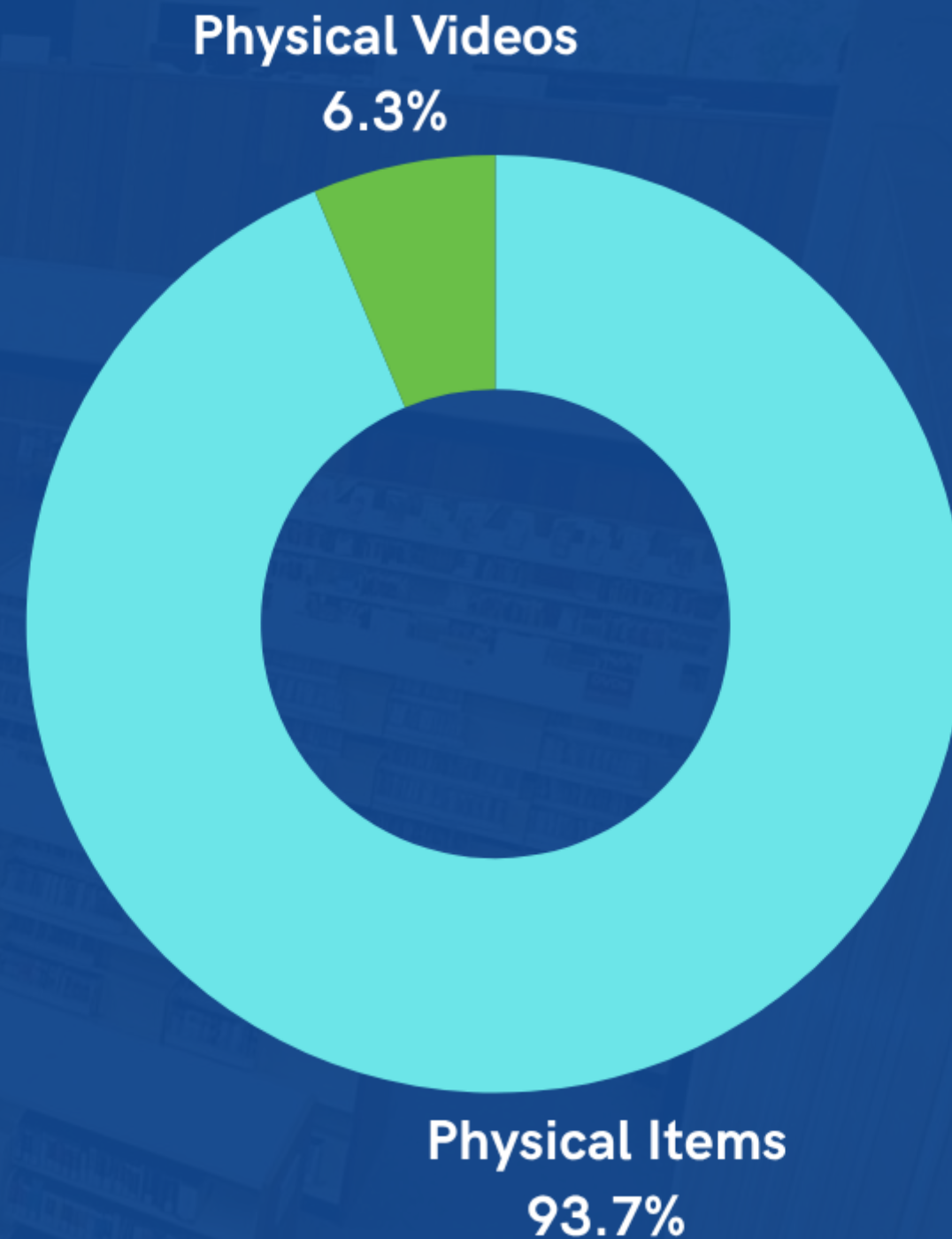
Our collection continues to be the heart of the library. In 2025, we continued to bridge the physical and digital worlds to support learning and entertainment for all ages:

131,088 Physical Items

8,802 Physical Videos

2,204,736 Titles across Libby, Hoopla, and Kanopy

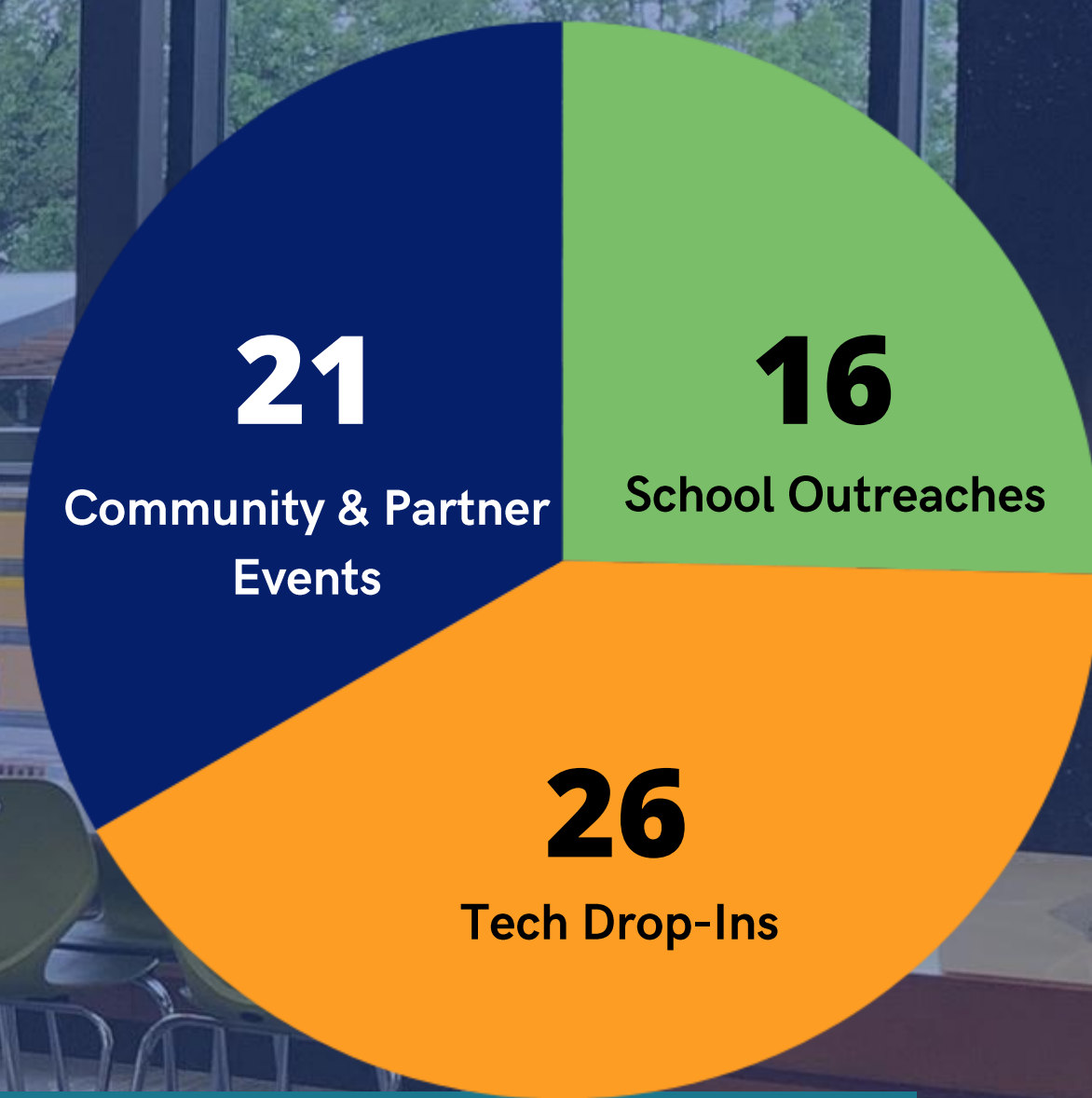
642,697 Total Checkouts



Beyond Our Doors

Manhattan Public Library is a hub of exchange that extends far beyond our physical walls. From community outreach to a robust digital infrastructure, we are bridging the gap between our collection and our community. No matter where you are, at home or on the move, our resources are right there with you.

63 Outreach Events



203,529
Total Use of Electronic Materials
28,146
Wifi Sessions

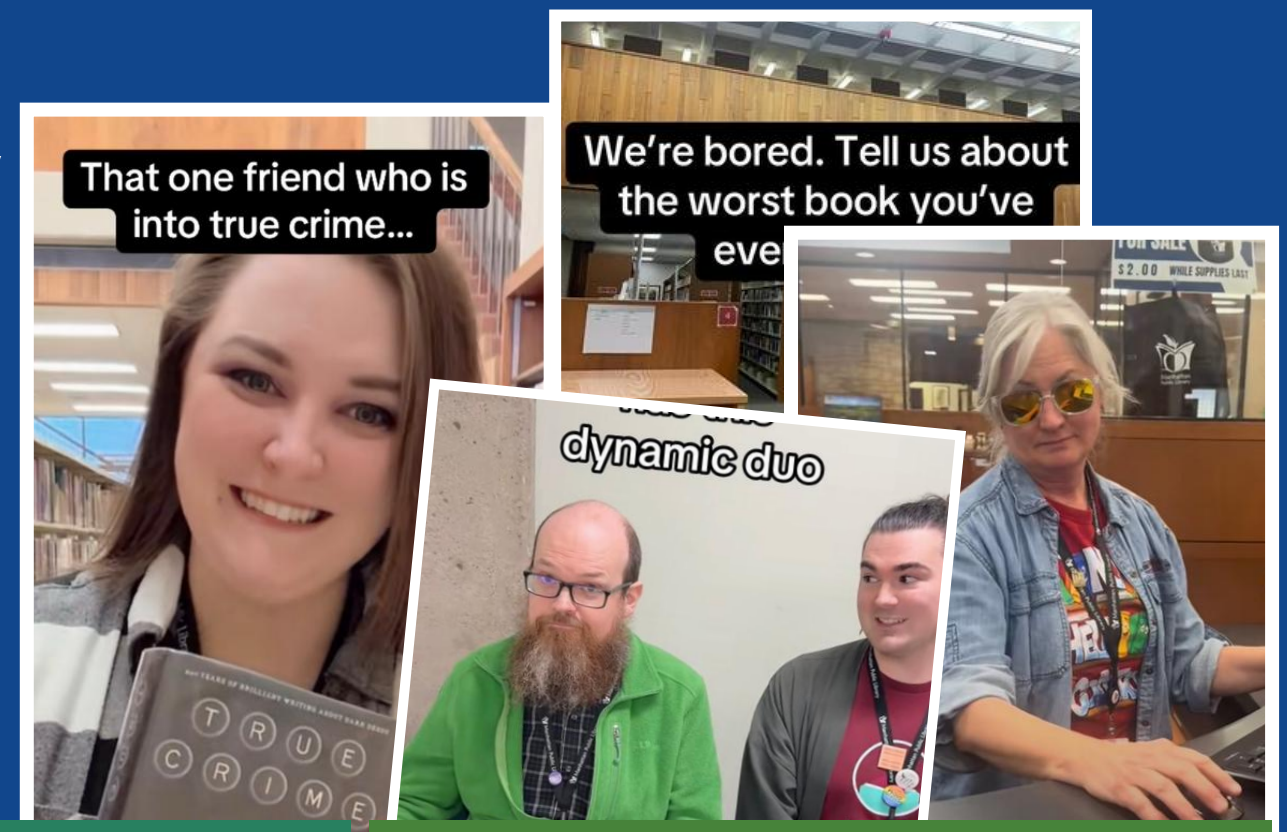


1,800
Items Shared With Other Libraries
3,528
Items Brought In Upon Patron Request

Science
←
J001-576

Connecting with our Community

Our mission extends far beyond our walls and onto every screen in Manhattan. In 2025, staff-led storytelling and humor-driven content helped us build a vibrant online community. With over 1.19 million impressions, our posts didn't just share information, they started conversations.



1.19 M

Impressions

How many times our content appeared on someone's screen

143,178

Video Views

How many times people stopped to watch our content

23,247

Reactions

Digital "acknowledgements" expressing an array of emotions towards our content

12,260

Comments

Represents direct interactions from people viewing our content

13,932

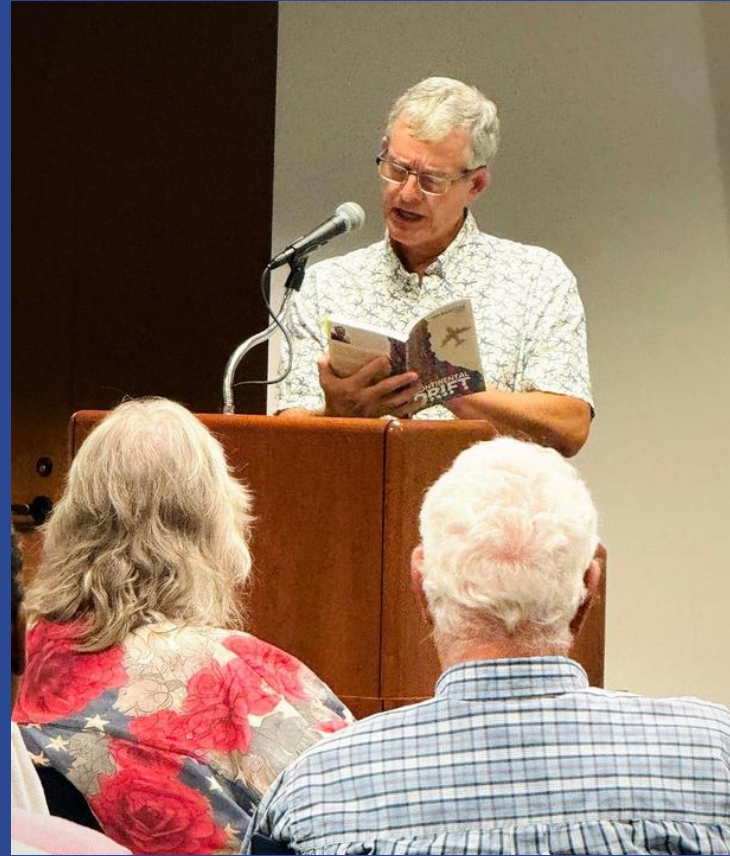
Followers Across Platforms



Programs That Connect Us

Our calendar is a reflection of Manhattan's curiosity. From the hands-on excitement of a children's scavenger hunt to the focused discussion of an adult book club, these 602 programs represent hundreds of opportunities for neighbors to learn something new. By hosting nearly 26,000 attendees this year, we've created a space where active participation is the primary way we build a stronger community together.

Homegrown Voices Author Panel



Crafternoon



602

Total Programs Offered

Early Literacy (Birth-5) 233 PROGRAMS | 10,337 ATTENDEES

Kids (6-11) 95 PROGRAMS | 5,801 ATTENDEES

Teens (12-18) 81 PROGRAMS | 1,696 ATTENDEES

Adults (12-18) 140 PROGRAMS | 1,931 ATTENDEES

All Ages 53 PROGRAMS | 6,128 ATTENDEES

25,893 People Total



Our "Color Our World" Summer Reading Program didn't just meet expectations, it redefined them. In a historic, record-breaking season, our patrons logged an astonishing 5,912,997 minutes of reading. This milestone reflects a vibrant, growing passion for literacy that spans every corner of our community.

5,912,997

Minutes read during Summer Reading

In 2024 we had **4.8 million** minutes, whereas in 2023 we had **2.3 million**.

9,726 Rewards Redeemed

3,268 Summer Reading Registrations

23 Local Business Sponsorships

16 School Outreaches and Tours Promoting Summer Reading



Librarian Laura at an assembly at one of Manhattan's many local elementary schools.



Top 5 Logged Books of the Summer

Big Impact, Small Cost:

City Tax Calculator > <https://cityofmhk.com/2545/Residential-Property-Tax-Calculator>

2025 City Budget > <https://www.manhattanks.gov/3742/2025-Budget-Book>

In 2025, the City levied **54.506 mills** with the library receiving **5.107 mills**



\$300,000

\$178 of paid property tax will support the library-equating to...

\$14.86 per month



\$200,000

\$118 of your property tax will support the library-equating to...

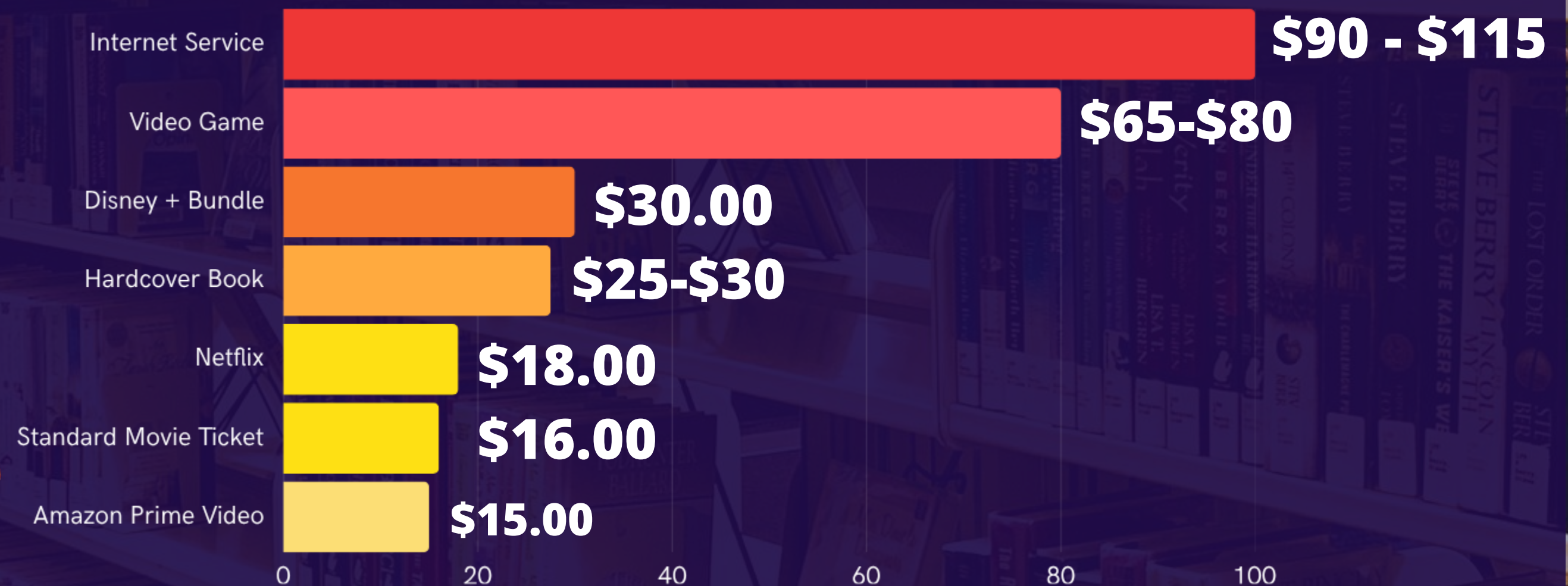
\$9.91 per month

Home Value X 11.5% = Assessed Value

1 mill is \$1 for every \$1,000 of Assessed Value

Kansas statewide assessment percentage is 11.5% meaning that Assessed Value, which is the value on which you pay taxes, is equal to 11.5% of your home's appraised value.

Your Library Card Unlocks Big Value!





“There is no power for change greater than a community discovering what it cares about.” – Margaret J. Wheatley, American author on leadership and community

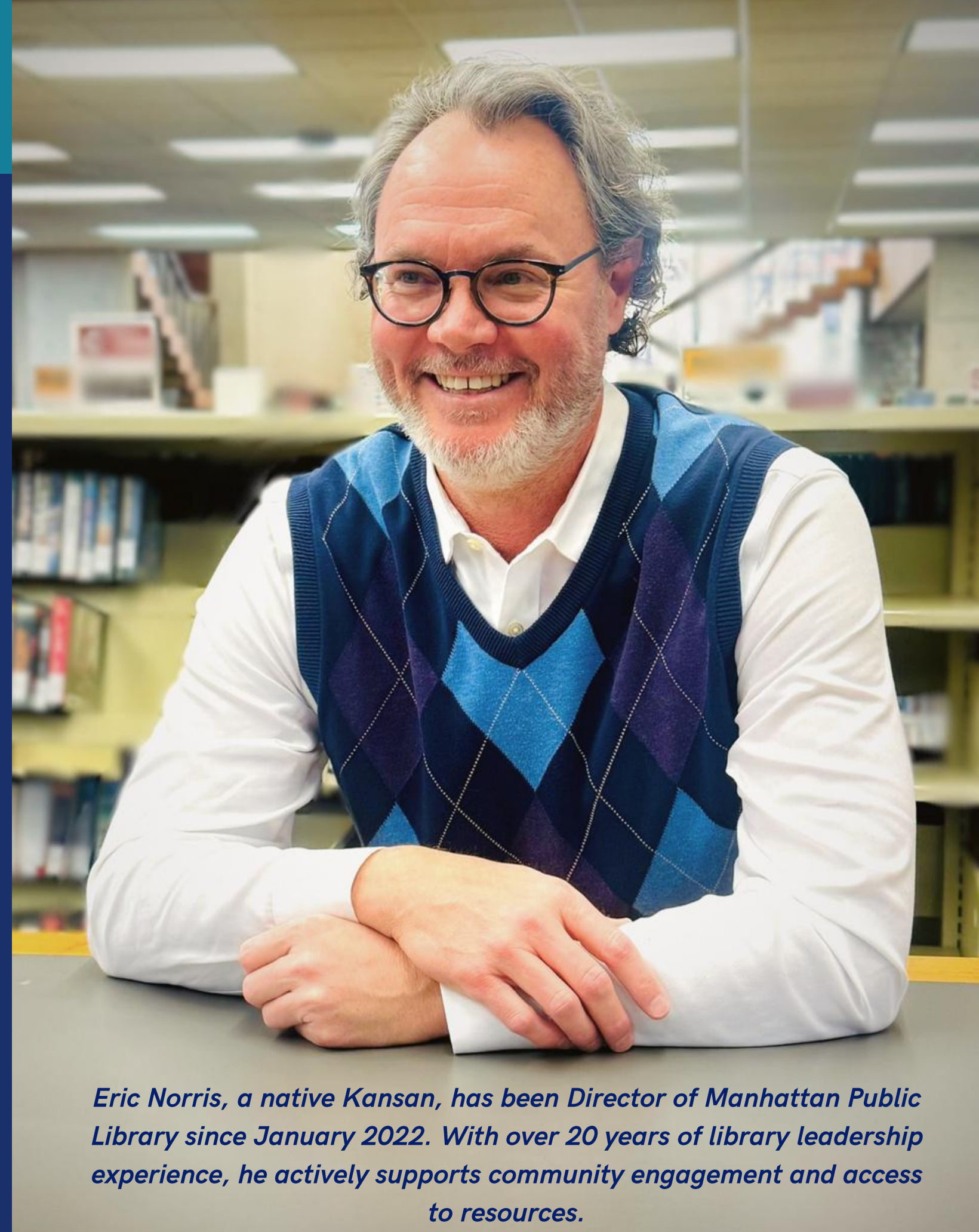
Message from our Director

To our Community Neighbors,

In 2025, Manhattan Public Library continued to serve as a vital community anchor for our neighbors. This year was defined by remarkable engagement, with over 414,000 visits and more than 642,000 items checked out across all formats. These numbers represent more than just statistics; they reflect a community that turns to the library as a primary destination for discovery, reliable information, and lifelong learning.

Our focus remains on providing a professional and accessible environment that meets the diverse needs of every resident. From fueling early literacy with over 10,000 attendees at our youth programs to providing critical digital access through nearly 25,000 public computer sessions, the library is a catalyst for connection in our community. We are proud to be careful stewards of the resources you entrust to us, and we invite you to explore what's next as we continue to grow together.

Sincerely,
Eric Norris



Eric Norris, a native Kansan, has been Director of Manhattan Public Library since January 2022. With over 20 years of library leadership experience, he actively supports community engagement and access to resources.

Acknowledgements

We extend our sincerest thanks to the individuals and organizations whose contributions have fueled our growth this year. Your commitment to literacy, community wellness, and architectural preservation ensures that the library remains a vibrant resource for all.

- Our Library Board of Trustees for their visionary leadership.
- Our Manhattan Library Foundation for their generous giving and sustained financial investment.
- Our Friends of the Library for their tireless advocacy and fundraising.
- Our City Officials and Municipal Staff for their continued support.
- Our Dedicated Volunteers & Staff who bring our mission to life every day.