

NYers booking it to the library

Attendance at the NYPL spiked to 18,211,405 last year.

(CHARLES ECKERT)



Funding is down, but visitors are up

BY TIM HERRERA
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Even funding cuts can't keep the library down.

The New York Public Library has seen a spike of 40% in program attendance and a nearly 60% increase in circulation over the last decade, despite an 8% cut in city funding, according to a recent report from the Center for an Urban Future.

In 2012, attendance at the NYPL jumped more than 700,000 to a record 18,211,405, the library said, which could be attributed to increased programming, renovated branches, more tourism and new higher-quality exhibitions, NYPL spokeswoman Angela Mon-

tefinise explained.

"During fiscal year 2012 we had over 10,000 extra programs and we targeted them better, [and] our program attendance has swelled by more than 200,000 during that period," Montefinise said, adding that recent renovations at the branches "continued to attract more patrons than ever before."

NYPL president Tony Marx said the study showed that libraries "are an essen-

tial and incomparable part of the city's educational infrastructure."

"The free social and educational services that we provide are needed now more than ever and are critical to the success of our communities," Marx said.

Indeed, overall library usage — not only for borrowing books, but other services as well — has in-

creased as budgets decline. Computer sessions at New York public libraries, for example, rose to 9.3 million from 5.8 million annually between 2007 and 2011. Funding dropped nearly \$70 million over roughly the same period.

Likewise, e-book checkouts rose nearly 179% between 2011 and 2012, according to the study.

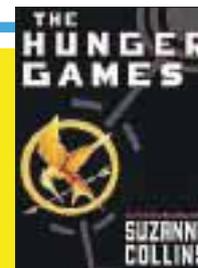
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Kathy Johns, 37, who lives in Bedford-Stuyvesant, is a regular at the Stephen A. Schwarzman Building — the NYPL's main branch — because she's enticed by the variety of services.

"I'm always in the library," Johns said.

"When I come home after work I won't have anything to do, so I want to read, to learn. I also rent movies ... [and use] the Internet," she said.

(WITH ANNA SANDERS)



TOP 10 BOOKS

Here are the 10 most-circulated books in 2012 at the NYPL:

1. *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins
2. *The Litigators* by John Grisham
3. *Mockingjay* by Suzanne Collins
4. *The Help* by Kathryn Stockett
5. *Catching Fire* by Suzanne Collins
6. *Explosive Eighteen* by Janet Evanovich
7. *V is for Vengeance* by Sue Grafton
8. *The Drop* by Michael Connelly
9. *Zero Day* by David Baldacci
10. *Guilty Wives* by James Patterson

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