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CONTENTS	Page No.
Pause & Ponder	2
Navrachana University Inaugurates the "Lord Bhikhu Parekh Study" at NUV Library	2
Forum to strengthen role of private libraries, cultural centres from Oct 5	2
We need to be cautious while implementing AI tools in libraries, says former V-C	3
This small town librarian offers a 'Bye, Bye AI' class to take AI off your phone. Now everyone wants in.	3
A library card is becoming an unexpected moneysaving tool in US; one Chicago-area library partnered with local businesses for discounts, while Brooklyn added 150,018 cardholders through August, up 16% from 2 years earlier	4
Oxford lets OpenAI train its AI models on Bodleian Library	4
INFLIBNET plugs kids-library gap in Gujarat: Student picks book on app, van delivers it in 24-48 hours	5
Public libraries emerge as key sites for building critical AI literacy	5
A dean of libraries explains how AI gives you 4 types of answers — and only one of them is 'factual'	6
Too many students have 'reading anxiety'. New research suggests it is triggered by problems in primary school	6

Pause & Ponder

"The adventure of life is to learn. The purpose of life is to grow. The nature of life is to change. The challenge of life is to overcome. The essence of life is to care. The opportunity of life is to serve. The secret of life is to dare. The spice of life is to befriend. The beauty of life is to give."

– William Arthur Ward

****Readers Please Note****

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Navrachana University Inaugurates the "Lord Bhikhu Parekh Study" at NUV Library



Vadodara (Gujarat) [India], September 28: Navrachana University today inaugurated the "Lord Bhikhu Parekh Study," a dedicated section at the NUV Library housing the personal collection of Lord Bhikhu Parekh, eminent political theorist, scholar, and Labour Party Member of the House of Lords, comprising over 1,800 rare and valuable books.

The inauguration ceremony was held at NUV Library, with Lord Parekh gracing the occasion as Chief Guest, accompanied by his family, which holds the rare distinction of having three members educated at Oxford University.

Speaking on the occasion, Smt. Tejal Amin, Chairperson, Navrachana Education Society, said: "The inauguration of the Lord Bhikhu Parekh Study is a proud and defining moment for Navrachana University. This collection is not merely a gift of books; it is a legacy of wisdom that will guide and inspire generations of our students and scholars. We are deeply grateful to Lord Parekh for entrusting us with this intellectual treasure and for reaffirming our shared belief in the power of knowledge to shape the future."

Late last year, the University of Oxford celebrated the life and work of Lord Bhikhu Parekh, an eminent political theorist and an active member of the House of Lords credited with pioneering concepts on multiculturalism, rights, and socio-cultural and political thought...

Source: [*The Tribune, 28 Sep 2026*](#)

Forum to strengthen role of private libraries, cultural centres from Oct 5



Muscat – Strengthening knowledge partnerships and enhancing the role of private libraries and cultural centres in Oman's cultural and knowledge landscape will be the focus of the 2026 Forum for Private Libraries and Cultural Centres, to be held from October 5 to 8.

Organised by the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth, represented by the

Department of Private Libraries and Cultural Centres, the forum will be held under the theme 'Partners in Knowledge Empowerment and Building Community Identity'.

The forum brings together those managing private libraries and cultural centres, along with specialists and supervisors from the directorates of culture, sports and youth in the governorates.

The event seeks to strengthen integration and partnership between the ministry and these institutions, while providing a platform for dialogue, exchange of experiences and expertise, and discussion of ways to develop services and programmes in line with developments in the cultural and knowledge sectors and the needs of beneficiaries.

The programme covers several areas, including institutional development, skills building and opportunities for future development. These sessions are designed to support those working in and supervising private libraries and cultural centres in responding to emerging changes, developing initiatives and improving the efficiency of services....

Source: [Muscat Daily, 28 Sep 2026](#)

We need to be cautious while implementing AI tools in libraries, says former V-C



AI can be beneficial to libraries, but its excessive use could affect human creativity and thinking abilities. It has both advantages and disadvantages, and librarians must use it cautiously to improve creativity and provide better services, said B.D. Kumbar, former Vice-Chancellor of Davangere University and former professor of library science, in Dharwad on Sunday (September 27). He was speaking at the valedictory function of the State Librarians' Conference at Karnataka Vidyavardhaka Sangha.

Prof. Kumbar expressed concern over the delay in filling vacancies of librarians across the State. At one time, around 35 librarians worked at the Karnatak University library. But now, only two are currently serving. The government should realise that libraries are institutions that play an important role in shaping the future of children and should develop libraries at all levels, he said...

Source: [The Hindu, 27 Sep 2026](#)

This small town librarian offers a 'Bye, Bye AI' class to take AI off your phone. Now everyone wants in.



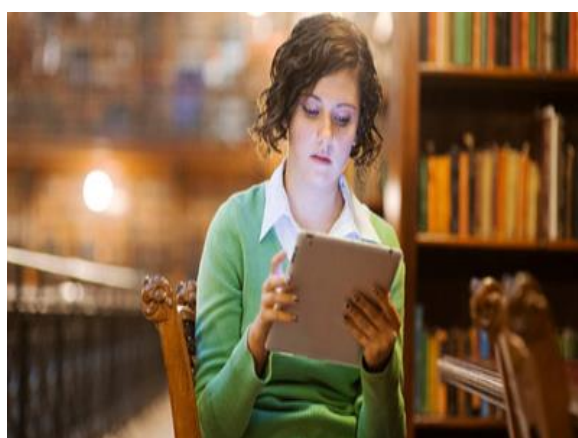
North Chatham, a hamlet in upstate New York halfway between Hudson and Albany, doesn't have much going on. You have to go to the next hamlet over for a store or restaurant. There's a

church, a post office, and a small public library with only about 800 cardholders.

The North Chatham Free Library has gotten a lot of attention lately, however, after a flyer for an upcoming "Bye Bye AI" event offering to remove the AI features from your phone or laptop went viral on Facebook, getting over 200 comments and 8,000 likes...

Source: [Business Insider, 27 Sep 2026](#)

A library card is becoming an unexpected moneysaving tool in US; one Chicago-area library partnered with local businesses for discounts, while Brooklyn added 150,018 cardholders through August, up 16% from 2 years earlier



A library card is becoming an unexpected money-saving tool for Americans, as public libraries expand beyond books and offer access to free entertainment, technology help, community services and, in some places, discounts at local businesses.

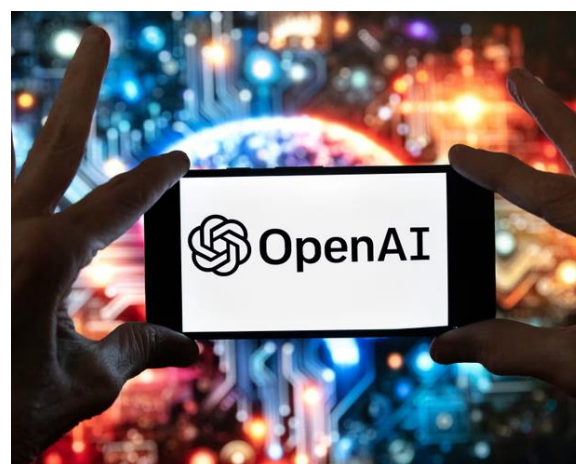
In Glenview, Illinois, a Chicago suburb, the local library partnered with businesses during September's Library Card Sign-Up Month to offer special deals to cardholders. Offers included discounts on purchases and services, with one deal offering 10% off wine and

another providing a free month of robotics classes, according to Fortune.

The initiative comes as Americans continue to deal with rising household costs. Consumer prices were up 3.4% over the previous year, according to data cited by Fortune, making free or discounted services increasingly attractive to households looking to reduce spending. But the savings available through a library card extend well beyond local business promotions...

Source: [The Times of India, 26 Sep 2026](#)

Oxford lets OpenAI train its AI models on Bodleian Library



The University of Oxford has allowed the company behind ChatGPT to train its AI models on historical texts from its Bodleian Library, as tech companies scour academic institutions for fresh data.

The Bodleian material digitised by OpenAI has been used to "populate the OpenAI training set", according to internal documents.

Oxford announced a partnership with the company in March 2025, using OpenAI software to digitise texts from the university's world-famous library, which it said would make the content

more widely available for students and researchers.

However, the announcement did not state the material would be used for training OpenAI's models, which are trained to recognise patterns in words – and thus “learn” to write complete sentences and perform other cognitive tasks – by being fed vast amounts of data...

Source: [The Guardian, 26 Sep 2026](#)

INFLIBNET plugs kids-library gap in Gujarat: Student picks book on app, van delivers it in 24-48 hours



Ahmedabad: A Class 10 student in Mansa govt school browses the state-run library in Gandhinagar and finds a book by her favourite author. On an app, the student chooses the book by its number. A dedicated van, plying between chosen schools and libraries, fetches the book from the specific library and, in 24 to 48 hours, delivers the title to the student.

“In a way, it is the equivalent of the food delivery apps, but for those hungry for knowledge,” said Prof Devika Madalli, director of the Information and Library Network (INFLIBNET). Gandhinagar-based INFLIBNET is among the University Grants Commission (UGC) Inter-University Centres (IUC).

The Gramin Gyan Setu initiative was launched by Union home minister and

Gandhinagar MP Amit Shah on Aug 12 — the National Librarian's Day...

Source: [The Times of India, 24 Sep 2026](#)

Public libraries emerge as key sites for building critical AI literacy



As artificial intelligence tools become increasingly embedded in work, government and everyday life, new research from UAlbany's Center for Technology in Government (CTG) suggests public libraries can play an important role in helping communities develop the skills to critically evaluate the technology, understand its risks and participate in decisions about how it is used.

The study, "Who Participates in AI Programs at Public Libraries? Exploring Demographic and Attitudinal Factors," was presented at the 18th International Federation for Information Processing Working Group 8.5 International Conference on Electronic Participation, or ePart 2026, held in Athens, Greece. The paper, authored by Zong-Xian (Sam) Huang, J. Ramon Gil-Garcia and Mila Gascó-Hernandez, was published in the conference proceedings.

The research examines not only who participates in AI-related programs at public libraries but also how participants' perceptions of AI's benefits and risks relate to their likelihood of taking part...

Source: [Phys.org, 24 Sep 2026](#)

A dean of libraries explains how AI gives you 4 types of answers — and only one of them is ‘factual’



I recently typed a simple question into Google search: How much screen time is too much for teenagers? Instead of presenting links, as Google had been doing for many years, it gave me an AI-generated answer. The artificial intelligence agent cited a number, then complicated that reply, noting that quality and balance of time could matter more than the number of hours, and that “too much” time could depend on a teenager’s sleep, exercise, school demands and mood.

I tried another search: Should I take a daily aspirin? This time the AI answer presented me with medical information, warned about risks and offered more tailored guidance if I provided my age and medical history.

These were good replies. What interested me was that they were different kinds of replies...

Source: [Fortune, 22 Sep 2026](#)

Too many students have ‘reading anxiety’. New research suggests it is triggered by problems in primary school



Western Australian author Hamish Kelly has struggled with reading for almost two decades. In his first of two books, he describes his experience of learning to read:

The letters in words were confusing and words often looked the same [...] Each year it got harder. Reading got harder and maths got twice as hard, as maths has lots of reading as well [...] By year 5, I was down on myself. I felt stupid and dumb!! My Mum, Dad, and teachers told me I wasn’t, but I still felt that I was. There [were] other challenges [...] like anxiety and loss of confidence.

What Hamish is describing is reading anxiety. This involves excessive worries and apprehensions about reading activities.

In the last eight years, there has been a five-fold increase in studies of reading anxiety, as we learn more about this educational challenge.

One of the things we are trying to work out is if reading difficulties cause reading anxiety or if reading anxiety causes reading difficulties...

Source: [The Conversation, 13 Sep 2026](#)

This issue has been compiled by the Institute for Plasma Research (IPR) Library, Gandhinagar