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Avidia Monthly



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In This Issue:

- ▣ **Samsung Pay and Android Pay Now Available!**
- ▣ **Applying for your mortgage has never been easier!**
- ▣ **Avidia Financial Center Coming Soon!**
- ▣ **Avidia Mobile 4.0**
- ▣ **Investing vs. Paying Off Debt**
Deciding factors include your financial resources and goals
- ▣ **How Online Banking Leads to Greater Awareness**
Managing your accounts online helps with budgeting, spending and fraud prevention
- ▣ **linked2pay Adds 'Pay by Text' to Bank Centric Payments**
- ▣ **Holiday Hours and Events**
- ▣ **Vehicle Details: Best Family Cars for Traveling**
Get ready for the holiday season
- ▣ **Benefits of Getting Life Insurance While Young**
Your life is valuable at any age—protect it!
- ▣ **Budgeting Tips for Holiday Gift-Giving**
The best ways to keep your personal finances in check this season
- ▣ **Interesting Facts about the Federal Reserve**
How much do you know about the U.S. central bank?



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Samsung Pay and Android Pay Now Available!

As Avidia Bank continues to add to its digital wallet offerings, all Avidia MasterCard debit and credit cards are Android Pay and Samsung Pay compatible!

Convenience

Android and Samsung Pay both offer an easier way to make purchases in stores at contactless enabled terminals or online.

- Make your purchases in store faster by unlocking your Android phone or swiping up on your Samsung phone and hold it up to the terminal. You do not even need to open the app!
- Android Pay and Samsung Pay information can be used to quickly checkout either through apps or your phone's browser.
- No longer have to search for your card in your wallet or purse or have to enter in card information for online purchases.

Secure

Contactless payments are more secure and safer than traditional card purchases. Why?

- Your card information is encrypted and secure on the phone so if your phone is lost or stolen, your card number cannot be accessed.
- A virtual account number is used to represent your card for purchases instead of your actual card number.
- Transactions can be made using fingerprint authentication.

Get started with Android Pay [here](#).

Get Started with Samsung Pay [here](#).

[View Samsung Pay and Android Pay Term & Conditions](#)

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Applying for your mortgage has never been easier!

If you need financing, we have the solutions for your primary or vacation home, investment property, construction and home improvement needs.

We offer a variety of loan options to choose from including fixed and adjustable rate mortgages, construction loans, home equity loans and lines of credit.

Purchasing a new home? We offer pre-approvals so you can shop for your home knowing how much you can afford. Ask about our closing cost credit for first-time home buyers.

Remodeling your home? If you are planning on remodeling your home, you can contact one of our mortgage professionals who will help find the right loan for you.

Applying for a loan? Our online application process allows you to provide just a little information and a loan officer will contact you.

Find out more here.

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Avidia Financial Center Coming Soon!

We are getting closer to the opening of the Avidia Financial Center at 17 Pope St. in Hudson! Follow along with our renovations and get a look behind the scenes by checking out our #17PopeSt Feed!

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Avidia Mobile 4.0

You will notice a dramatically new look to the current mobile platform this fall. Once a release date is finalized, we will communicate to everyone to check out the new look of Avidia Mobile!

There will be no need to install another app as the app will update automatically when the launch date arrives.

Coming along with the new user interface are intuitive Smart Calculators. Calculate anything from savings accrual to a potential mortgage payment. You will be able to email the results to yourself or apply through the mobile app for the Avidia product you want.

Find out more and see some of the screenshots from the new app here.

*Data and text messaging rates apply.

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Investing vs. Paying Off Debt

Deciding factors include your financial resources and goals

Some people will decide to pay off all their debts before ever investing money, while others will say it's better to carry livable debt and be able to grow your savings over time. There are pros and cons to either option, depending on your financial situation.

What to consider first

According to an October 2014 article in U.S. News Money by contributor Joanne Cleaver, paying off debt first means losing potential compound interest earned on any investments you would have made during that time. On the other hand, investing first means having to manage your debt and pay more in interest over time. And if you've invested your money, you likely have fewer funds to make payments toward your debt.

Cleaver says that understanding your financial situation and what you can handle is the largest determinant. She suggests you find your tipping point for affordability by looking at the interest rates of your loans and calculating how much it will cost you on a monthly basis to maintain the debt. If the number doesn't fall within your affordability parameters, consider paying off the debt before doing any investing.

To do this, Paul Heising, a financial adviser with California-based investment firm Smarter Decisions, recommends “[organizing] consumer debt accounts according to their interest rates so you can see which are costing you the most,” and to “pay back loans with the higher interest rates first, especially if those rates are over 10 percent annually.”



Advantages of doing both

Other experts recommend striking a balance of paying off your debt and investing, but only with certain, less-risky investments at first. Joshua Kennon, author of *Investing for Beginners*, suggested such a balance in a January 2016 article on the financial resource website TheBalance.com.

According to Kennon, you should fund any workplace retirement accounts, like a 401(k), and start an emergency fund using an FDIC-insured institution while paying down any high-interest rate loans, like student loans and credit cards. Then, he advises to circle back to investing more money into such savings vehicles as an IRA or Roth IRA, and begin building assets in mutual fund and brokerage accounts.

He listed three main points in his reasoning:

1. “You minimize your tax bill, both from earned income and on investment income, which means more money in your own pocket.”
2. “You create significant bankruptcy protection for your retirement assets. Your

employer-sponsored retirement plan, such as 401(k), has unlimited bankruptcy protection under the current rules, while your Roth IRA has \$1,245,475 in bankruptcy protection as of 2015.”

3. Reducing debt over time allows you to build up while you pay down, so that when you are debt-free you suddenly have a major stream of cash to do with what you want.

An article by CFP Nick Holeman for investment management firm Betterment suggested a similar plan to pay off debt while investing in certain funds.

Holeman advised making at least the minimum payment on your bills, on time, while taking advantage of any employer retirement savings as you pay off major debt. Then you can build your emergency fund and finally invest further for retirement and savings.

Contributing to your company 401(k), even with debt, is important, said Holeman. Especially if your employer has a match contribution, making your contribution maximum to earn the match can yield a higher return on your investment than can many other investment alternatives.

“If you have debt that’s costing you over five percent in fees, pay it off as fast as you can. Start with the highest-interest debt first,” Holeman suggested.

In the end, the decision between off all your debts first, investing all your money first or balancing a plan of both depends on your financial risk-taking and resources.

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How Online Banking Leads to Greater Awareness

Managing your accounts online helps with budgeting, spending and fraud prevention

Online banking, now accessible from any mobile device, helps people be more aware of their spending and bank account data. With online banking, it's much easier to prevent and detect fraud, manage your budget and ensure bill payments are received by the correct institution.

Transaction and Fraud Awareness

Most, if not all financial institutions now offer customers the ability to sign up for an online banking account. There are even some financial institutions that operate solely online. This makes it much easier to track your spending and manage your budget.

“People may find that online banking makes sticking to a budget easier because you can easily sort payments to see how much was paid to specific budget categories ... and [it] allows you to compare spent amounts with budgeted amounts — so your budget resembles your real life as closely as possible,” wrote Investopedia contributor Ryan Barnes.



In fact, with online banking, you can stay up to date with your transactions and account balance almost in real time. It's important to note that the balance and data listed on your online account statement may not be precisely accurate, as transactions could be pending or larger amounts than what you've purchased could be posted, such as with gas station purchases or hotel reservations.

However, Barnes reported that “some personal finance software programs (such as Quicken) can be linked directly to your online accounts to provide real-time analysis of all your balances and cash flows.” There are also money management apps, like Mint, that can sync with your online accounts to provide real-time information.

This is especially important in safeguarding against fraud. Some financial experts recommend checking your accounts and balances daily so you can quickly catch identity theft. If a fraudulent charge is made or money is withdrawn from your account without your authorization, you will be able to resolve the issue quickly, before more damage can be done.

Overdraft Fees and Bill Pay

Being able to track your account data also helps you protect yourself (and your money) from overdraft fees from the financial institution.

“If you sign up for online alerts with your [financial institution], you will receive an email when your checking account balance dips below a certain limit, say \$50 or \$100,” Lucy Lazarony, Credit.com

contributor, wrote in an April 2014 article. Then you can make sure to transfer or deposit money into the account to avoid the penalty, which is \$20 to \$35 for most institutions.

Online banking also helps automate bill payments to help you ensure that your bills are paid on time and that they go to the correct person or business.

“You can have the payment go out on pre-determined dates (as in every month on the 15th) or simply log into your account each month and manually trigger the charges to your accounts. Either way, there is no postage to pay—and you can see the effect on your account balances immediately,” said Barnes.

With online banking, you will not only be more likely to think about what you’re buying but also be more aware of your transaction history, allowing you to catch and prevent identity theft and stay within your planned budget.

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linked2pay Adds 'Pay by Text' to Bank Centric Payments

linked2pay, an award-winning banking and payments technology provider announced today that they have added 'Pay by Text' as an option on their Bank Centric Payments platform. This enables partners on the bank integrated platform to offer card and ACH payments via SMS text as a fully integrated, branded solution.

Already a leading option for making transfers and settling up a tab among friends, our approach extends payments by text to a broader business usage. Ideal for invoicing or donation requests, a recipient of a text clicks to access their secure wallet to complete the transaction (by card or ACH) and receives an immediate receipt.

"We recently launched HarleyPay and I can tell you that it is packed with features that we have not previously seen on one platform. The addition of payments and donations by text will be of great interest and benefit to our business and non-profit customers," says Kirk Nellis, President of Harley Financial Services.

The 'Pay by Text' option joins online forms, mobile, email, virtual terminal, phone (IVR), shopping cart checkout and Remote Deposit (RDC) to give organizations a true single vendor option.

"This new feature is a prime example of how the platform helps us as a bank and our resellers to more effectively offer payment acceptance methods that keep pace with market demands," adds Bart Murphy, Executive Vice President of Commercial Banking, Avidia Bank.

As a business payment solution, Bank Centric Payments consolidates an array of fully integrated options to accept card, ACH and RDC payments.

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Holiday Hours and Events

Veteran's Day Hours: Avidia Bank Branches Closed on 11/11/2016 in observance of Veteran's Day. Our branches will reopen on Saturday, November 12, 2016 for normal business hours.

Thanksgiving Hours: Avidia Bank Branches Closed on 11/24/2016 in observance of Thanksgiving. Our branches will reopen on Friday, November 25, 2016 for normal business hours.

You can always bank 24/7 online or through the Avidia Mobile App!

Community Harvest Project Harvest Home 5k and Festival Nov. 6 at 10:30am

Taste of North Central MA Nov. 16 6:00pm-8:30 pm

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Vehicle Details: Best Family Cars for Traveling

Get ready for the holiday season

It's nearly that time of year again when everyone packs into the family vehicle to head to wherever the holiday celebrations take them. Here are some vehicles that can help make your travels more enjoyable:

Chevrolet Tahoe — Ranked the No. 1 large SUV by U.S. News & World Report, the Tahoe has seating for up to nine people and the capability to get through even the nastiest of weather in comfort. A potent 5.3-liter V-8 makes 355 hp and 383 lb/ft of torque, allowing for 8,600 pounds of towing capacity that can help you bring even the largest of presents to Grandma's house. The Chevrolet MyLink system, push-button start, wireless charging and OnStar vehicle telematics are only a handful of the amenities you can add to the big SUV. A high-strength safety cage, seven airbags and available Side Blind Zone Alert and Lane Keep Assist help keep everyone safe.

"The 2016 Chevrolet Tahoe continues the tradition set down by its 4-wheeled forefathers with a new level of refinement and luxury elevating the entire Chevrolet brand," Autotrader noted. "The Tahoe has been a best-seller and is a favorite with American families due to its tough construction, massive interior space and powerful V8 engine, allowing it to tow far greater loads than any car-based crossover".

Chrysler Pacifica — As the newest minivan on the market, the 2017 Chrysler Pacifica has quickly shot to the top of the U.S. News & World Report rankings and it's easy to see why. In addition to its affordable \$28,595 starting MSRP and seating for up to eight, the Pacifica is available with some of the most family-friendly features, including the Uconnect Theater system, which can keep kids busy on even the longest of drives. The 3.6-liter V-6 engine produces a best-in-class 283 hp and 262 lb/ft of torque and is paired with an advanced nine-speed automatic transmission that helps it earn an unsurpassed EPA-estimated 28 mpg highway. Other highlights include Parallel and Perpendicular Park Assist, the Stow 'n Go seating and storage system, and Stow 'n Vac™ powered by RIDGID®.

"But what I love most about the Pacifica," added CNET, "is its unabashed van-ness in a world where everything is a crossover, 'wagon' is a four-letter word and telling your friends that you're considering a minivan is tantamount to announcing that you've given up on life. It warms my heart to see there's still innovation and competition to be found in this shrinking class, and that the form and function can work together."

Subaru Forester — If you don't need a larger vehicle, the five-passenger 2017 Subaru Forester is the perfect companion. Thanks to standard Symmetrical All-Wheel Drive, the Forester can handle nearly anything you throw its way with virtually no penalty to fuel economy, which is rated up to 32 mpg highway. You can choose from two SUBARU BOXER® engines: a 170-hp, 2.5-liter four-cylinder or a 250-hp, turbocharged 2.0-liter four-cylinder. Depending on the model, you can equip the Forester with the SUBARU STARLINK™ Multimedia system, EyeSight® Driver Assist Technology and even a Harman Kardon audio system. The Forester



earned a five-star overall rating from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.



“Long known as a roomy, sure-footed but slightly dowdy compact crossover, the Forester is more stylish and commodious than before, and it’s also much improved in an area that’s increasingly important to a majority of buyers: fuel efficiency,” summarized Left Lane News.

Regardless of which model you choose, we have the right financing for your needs. Stop by today and let us help you get started.

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Benefits of Getting Life Insurance While Young

Your life is valuable at any age—protect it!

No one wants to think about death, especially when they're young. But there are plenty of reasons they may want to start thinking about it and how to take that first step toward financial protection.

"A life insurance policy can provide a safety net," said Daniel Bortz of U.S. News & World Report—and not just one for your future. Here are three reasons why you should look into getting life insurance at a younger age:

1. It's less expensive now — A 2016 study from LIMRA and the nonprofit insurance education group Life Happens found that 64 percent of consumers don't have life insurance because they think they can't afford it. However, a separate study from the same two groups showed that a staggering 80 percent of consumers have the wrong idea about how much it actually costs.

"Millennials, for example, believe life insurance policies are more than three times more expensive than they actually are," wrote Michael Estrin, personal finance reporter for Bankrate.com. "In fact, premiums for life insurance are typically lower than for other forms of insurance and are often less expensive than monthly bills for cable or cellphones."

The cost of life insurance varies based on gender, age and health, which is why the longer you put off purchasing it, the more you will spend. As age rises, so does the likelihood you'll have issues with your health.



2. You can't predict the future — Getting life insurance is similar to getting auto insurance: nobody ever wants to have to use it, but it provides a great safety net when they need it. That said, a young person may think they don't need life insurance because they are single or live alone without family. However, those circumstances can always change.

"Think of how much [their] lives have changed in the last five years," Al Schor, field director with financial planning firm Northwestern Mutual, advised his clients. "They've graduated college or started a career. They can't presume to know exactly what's going to, or not going to, happen in the next five years," he said in a Forbes article.

Life insurance would not only help protect your home and family in the future, but could also help your family now, especially if you have outstanding student loan debt. Federal loans are dischargeable—not automatically discharged—when you die and private lenders often assign the loan responsibilities to a surviving spouse, parent or co-signer. That's just one more reason not to wait to buy life insurance.

3. It helps build a solid financial plan — According to Estrin, getting life insurance is just something

that, as an adult, you ultimately need to do.

“You’re not a kid anymore. Your parents aren’t going to take care of this for you. You need to accept the responsibility as an adult and take care of your loved ones because no one else in the world will,” Joel Steele, co-owner of New Jersey’s Steele Financial Solutions, told Estrin.

It may help, Schor said, to think about life insurance’s purposes from another angle.

“What they need to realize is that it’s not just about a death benefit or protecting loved ones,” he said of young adults. “It’s an integral part of a successful and balanced strategic financial plan.”

So whether you do it for yourself, your loved ones or the loved ones you may have in the future, life insurance should be seen as a necessity, not an option—and it’s best not to procrastinate.

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Budgeting Tips for Holiday Gift-Giving

The best ways to keep your personal finances in check this season

It's no secret that the holiday season costs people a large chunk of money, what with all the spending on decorating, traveling, meal planning and more. One of the biggest sources of spending is gift-giving. The following are five tips for staying in budget:

1. Make a detailed list.

Write down the names of everyone you'd like to get gifts for and what you have in mind for them. According to Kerry Sherin, a savings expert for Offers.com and contributor to U.S. News & World Report, it also helps to include an estimated dollar amount you'd like to spend for each person, as a reminder not to overspend and send your whole budget off track.



2. Pre-shop online.

"Do some research before you hit the stores. Call around and go online to find better deals. You should also try to consolidate to a few stores to cut down on transportation costs," said Mellody Hobson, president of Ariel Capital Management and personal finance expert at Good Morning America.

3. Look for additional discounts.

Comparison shopping for traditional sales isn't the only way to get the best deals. Browser extensions such as Ebates and mobile applications like RetailMeNot compile available coupon and discount codes for you based on your location or the product for which you are looking.

You can also create your own discount by simply being aware of various stores' price-matching policies. Many people don't know that stores like Target and Toys "R" Us will match Amazon's and other online retailers' prices online and in store.

4. Start early.

This tip applies to both saving and shopping. Set money aside early so that holiday expenses don't blindsides you and your bank account.

"Want to make it almost painless? Set up an automatic deposit to a savings account or Christmas club fund," advised Dana Dratch of Bankrate.com.

By shopping ahead, you can make the most of sales and seasonal pricing trends, picking up certain gifts at bargain prices.

"For people you know you'll be buying gifts for, like parents, siblings or children, keep a running list of things they express interest in. Then, acquire them whenever you can find a good deal or have some extra room in your budget," said personal finance expert Amy Fontinelle on Investopedia.com.

5. Don't use credit cards.

Take advantage of that saved-up money and make your purchases in cash or debit rather than on a credit card. You will spend only what you have available and avoid interest charges.

“When you pay with cash, you have a finite amount of it in hand at any one time. A cash transaction can feel more real, making us spend less freely,” The Motley Fool’s Selena Maranjian told USA Today.

In fact, Maranjian quoted a Dun & Bradstreet study that found that people spend 12-18 percent more when using charge cards than when paying in cash.

The holidays are about spending time with and celebrating loved ones, not about spending your life savings on presents for them. With a little planning and patience, you can have a happy and memorable season without breaking the bank.

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Interesting Facts about the Federal Reserve

How much do you know about the U.S. central bank?

According to the Federal Reserve System's website, "the Fed"—as it is often called—is the fiscal agent for the U.S. government, created by Congress to provide the nation with a more flexible yet more stable and therefore safer monetary and financial system.

Below are just a few of the interesting facts about this little-known sector of our government:

It's been around for more than 100 years — The Panic of 1907—a three-week period in October when the New York Stock Exchange fell almost 50 percent from its peak the year prior—led Americans to call for a central bank. On Dec. 23, 1913, President Woodrow Wilson signed the Federal Reserve Act into law. Today, the organization is tasked with maintaining the U.S. Treasury's checking account and processing payments such as Social Security, among many other roles and responsibilities.



It doesn't create money — "With its monetary tools, [the Fed] can influence the money supply, while [the] U.S. Treasury actually prints money," Kim Porter of Bankrate.com wrote.

In reality, new money is created when private banks (which are all technically stockholders, or part owners, of the Fed) make loans, said Morgan Housel, investment expert with The Motley Fool.

"And the Fed doesn't really have any control [over] that," she continued. "They can try to influence that with lower interest rates and changing the amount of what's called bank reserves, which is the amount of money [financial institutions] hold at the Fed. So, they can try to influence it, but they really don't have any power over it."

It doesn't determine interest rates for your car or home loans — This is another common misconception. In fact, the interest rate that you would pay on your car loan or mortgage is set by the financial institution that is lending you that money. As with the creation of money, the Federal Reserve does influence financial institution's rates with the rates it is moving around, but there are also many other factors at play that are totally removed from the Federal Reserve, such as your credit score and the housing market.

It's extremely trustworthy — It's typical to be skeptical of both the banking system and the government, especially in a volatile economic environment, but they know what they're doing. To begin with, there is a strong system of checks and balances in place.

"The financial statements of the Board of Governors and the 12 Reserve Banks are audited annually by public accounting firms," says the Fed website.

Furthermore, the organization is led by some of the brightest minds in the nation. For example, Bankrate.com said that Ben Bernanke, chairman of the Federal Reserve from 2006 to 2014, taught himself calculus in high school and also earned a near-perfect score of 1590 on his SAT.

You can follow the Fed on social media — The Federal Reserve, in and of itself, is one big, profitable financial institution. And like you would with your community bank, you can follow the Fed on social media to see what it has been up to in the financial world. Chairman Bernanke held the first Fed press conference following a meeting of the Federal Open Market Committee (a group comprising seven members of the Board of Governors and five of the 12 Reserve Bank presidents, which determines the direction of monetary policy) on April 27, 2011, disclosing minutes and answering questions. The Fed also has a Twitter account, a YouTube channel and its own mobile application, and the Board of Governors has a Facebook page.

Hopefully, you now have a better understanding of what the Federal Reserve System actually does, and perhaps you can impress your friends with a few fun facts.

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