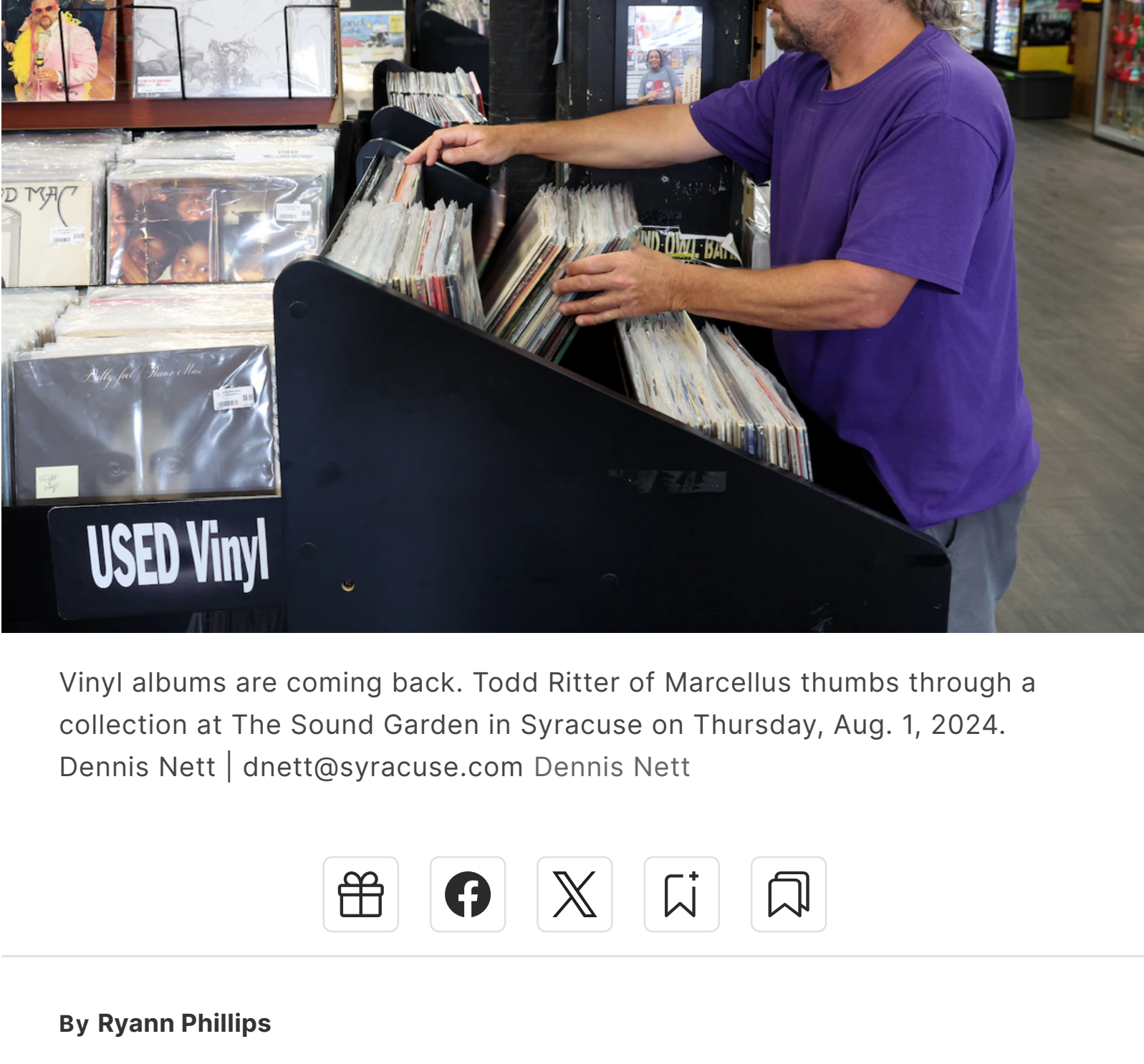
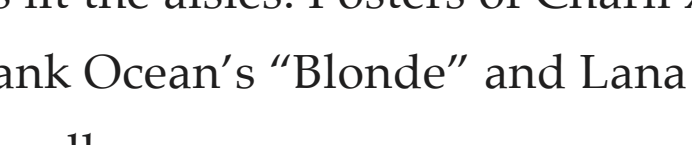


Vinyl revival hits Syracuse record stores: ‘It’s kind of a status symbol now’

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Vinyl albums are coming back. Todd Ritter of Marcellus thums through a collection at The Sound Garden in Syracuse on Thursday, Aug. 1, 2024. Dennis Nett | dnett@syracuse.com Dennis Nett



By Ryann Phillips

Around 6 p.m. on a Wednesday in downtown Syracuse, 14-year-old Marshall Bindel searched through vinyls and CDs at The Sound Garden.

Fluorescent bulbs lit the aisles. Posters of Charli XCX’s new “Brat” album, Frank Ocean’s “Blonde” and Lana Del Rey’s “Born to Die” lined the walls.

Bindel began listening to records two years ago. His collection includes 15 vinyls.

“I don’t like streaming services because you have to pay so much for everything, and you never own anything and there’s still ads,” said Bindel. “You just pay once for this, \$7.99, and it’s like you’re going to have it forever.”

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Sales of vinyl records [peaked](#) in the 1970s, but revenue from this previously outdated format has slowly increased over the last 17 years in the United States.

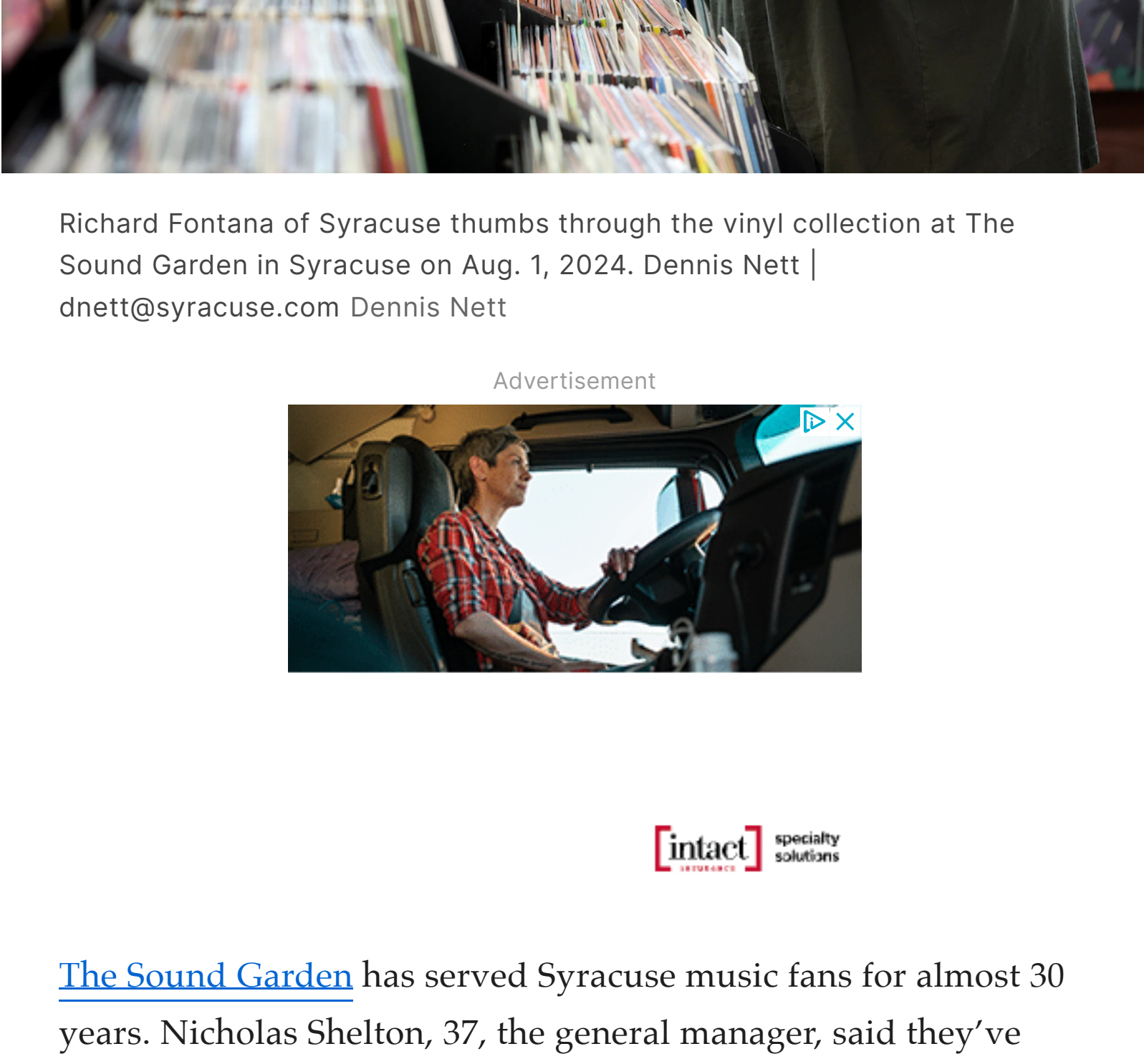
Revenue from newly pressed vinyls grew 10 percent from 2022 to 2023, according to the [Recording Industry Association of America](#).

Vinyls also outsold CDs in 2023 for only the second time in almost 40 years.

Matthew Bass, vice president of research and gold & platinum operations at the RIAA, said fans are driving vinyl revenue back. Some users decorate their homes with their favorite records, while others listen.

“It’s kind of a status symbol now, and this is really trending towards the younger generation,” Bass said.

Now the vinyl revival has hit Syracuse, where people race to places like The Sound Garden and Eastcoast Bandits to get new vinyl.



Richard Fontana of Syracuse thums through the vinyl collection at The Sound Garden in Syracuse on Aug. 1, 2024. Dennis Nett | dnett@syracuse.com Dennis Nett

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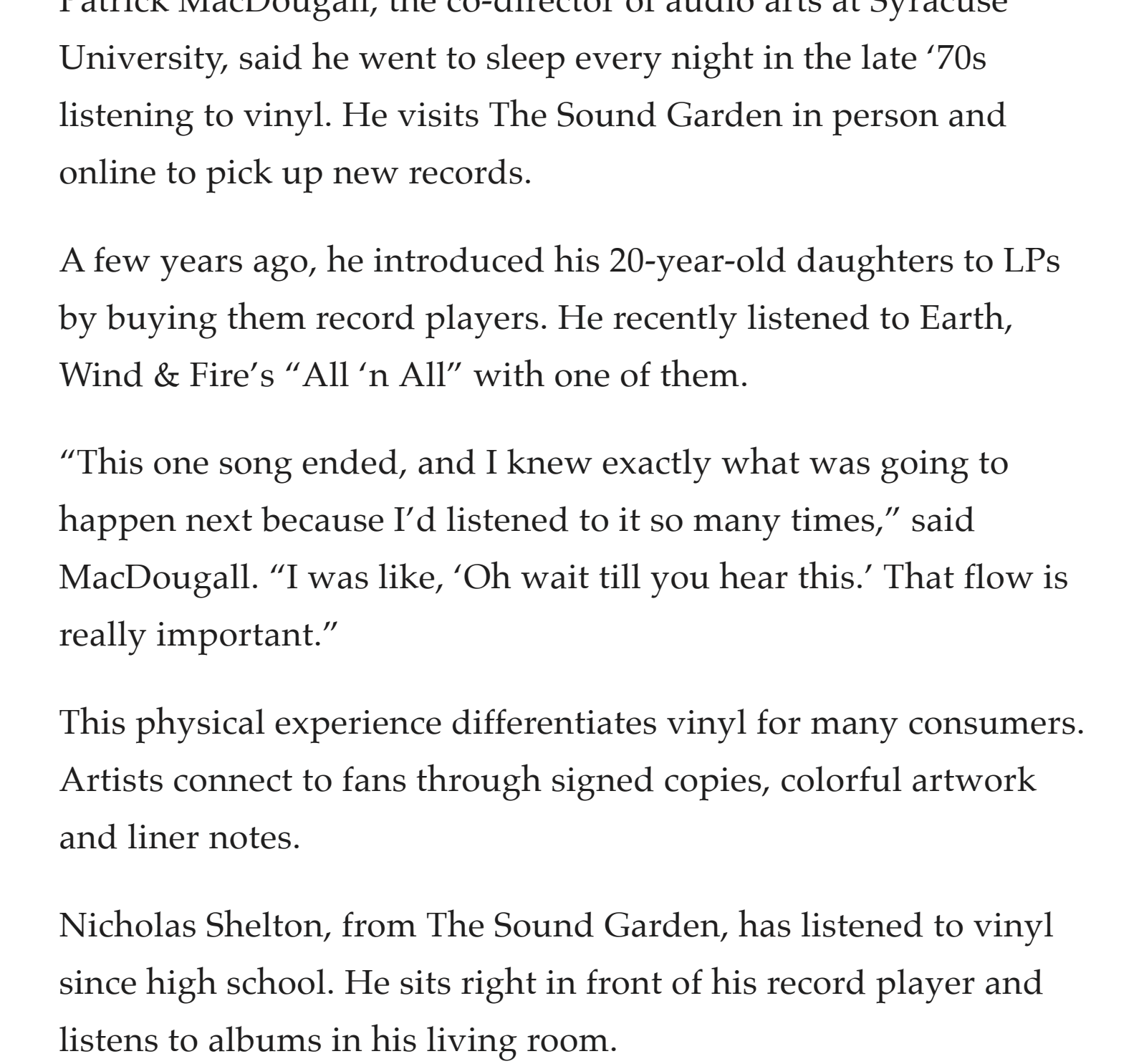
[The Sound Garden](#) has served Syracuse music fans for almost 30 years. Nicholas Shelton, 37, the general manager, said they’ve seen the growth of vinyl post-pandemic. People of all races, ages and genders frequent their store.

Lauren Kaszuba, a Syracuse native, visited the store on a recent Saturday.

“I love collecting vinyl,” said Kaszuba, 25. “I picked up a Taylor Swift vinyl and an Olivia Rodrigo vinyl.”

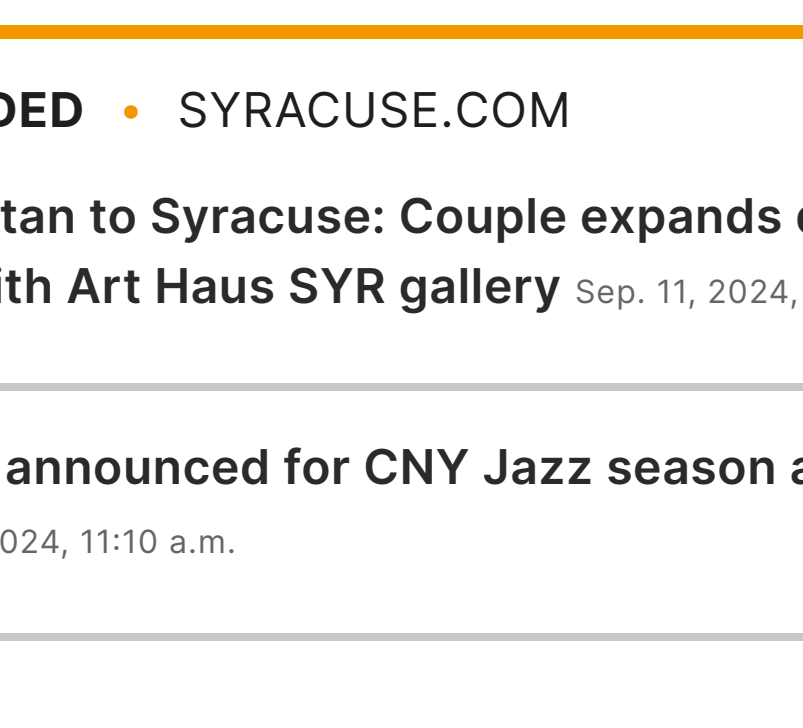
Others recognize the connectivity of vinyl through celebratory events.

Since 2008, [Record Store Day](#) has celebrated independent record stores across the country. It happens on the third Saturday of every April. Special vinyl and CDs are released, and it’s a way to honor staff members, artists, and music lovers across the nation.



Record Store Day at The Sound Garden, 310 W. Jefferson St. Matthew Sanders and Melissa Dewitt from Albany head for the checkout with their finds. Melissa said she was looking for Newport Folk Festival and Elephant: The White Stripes album. (File 2013 | David Lassman) File 2013

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Patrick MacDougall, the co-director of audio arts at Syracuse University, said he went to sleep every night in the late ‘70s listening to vinyl. He visits The Sound Garden in person and online to pick up new records.

A few years ago, he introduced his 20-year-old daughters to LPs by buying them record players. He recently listened to Earth, Wind & Fire’s “All ‘n All” with one of them.

“This one song ended, and I knew exactly what was going to happen next because I’d listened to it so many times,” said MacDougall. “I was like, ‘Oh wait till you hear this.’ That flow is really important.”

This physical experience differentiates vinyl for many consumers. Artists connect to fans through signed copies, colorful artwork and liner notes.

Nicholas Shelton, from The Sound Garden, has listened to vinyl since high school. He sits right in front of his record player and listens to albums in his living room.

“There’s almost like a ritualistic element to listening to records,” Shelton said. “Getting to the record player, lifting the lid, taking the record out, putting it on, dropping the needle.”

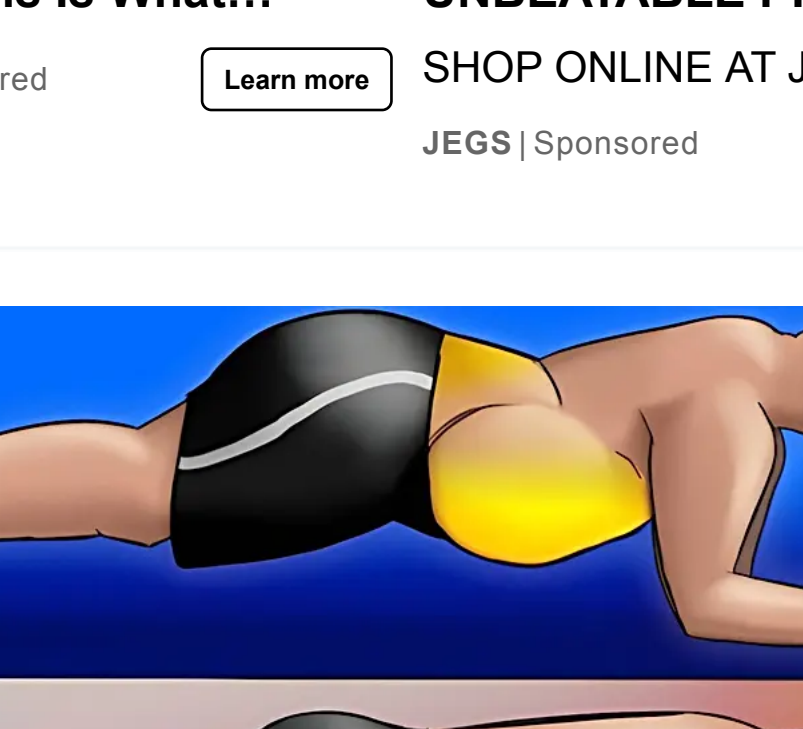
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Janelle Brailsford, co-owner of [Eastcoast Bandits](#), joined the vinyl revival last September when she and her sister opened a record store on the first floor of the McCarthy Building. Brailsford often finds herself bonding over vinyl with the Syracuse community.

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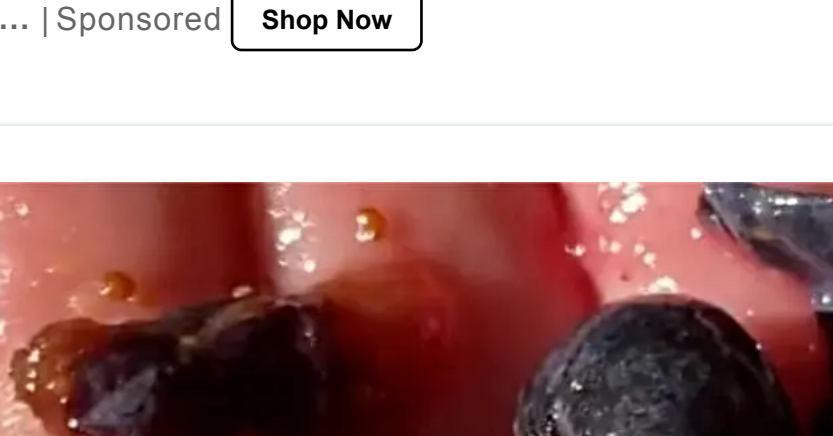


“Imagine you’re walking into this space and you hear Erykah Badu or you hear Mobb Deep,” Brailsford said. “It’s an opportunity to bring like-minded people together, cause you can connect over music.”

Ryann Phillips is a graduate student at Syracuse University’s Newhouse School and a contributing writer for [syracuse.com](#) and The Post-Standard. Contact Ryann at [rphill08@syr.edu](#).

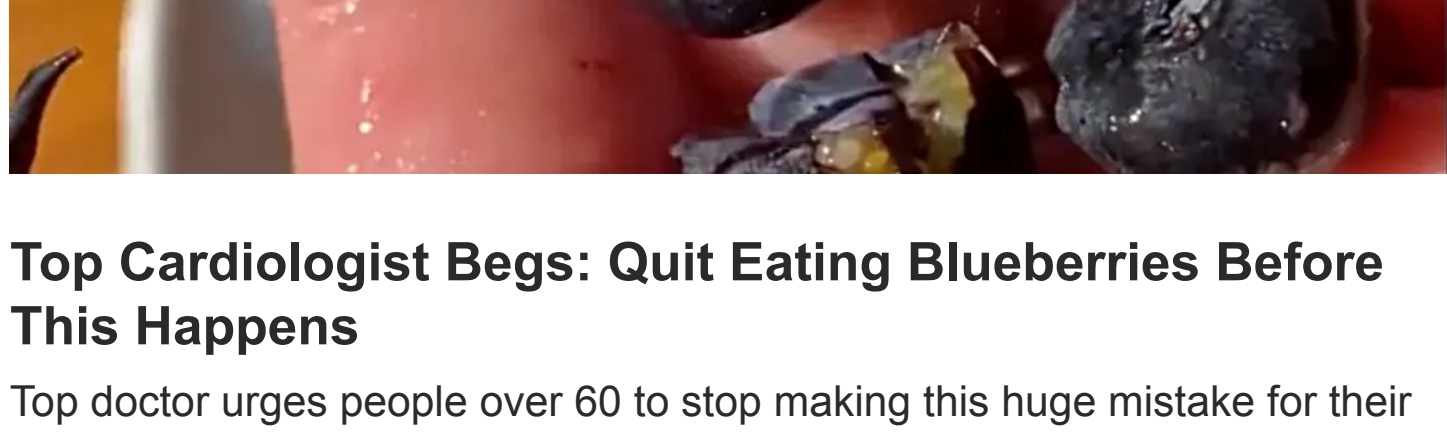
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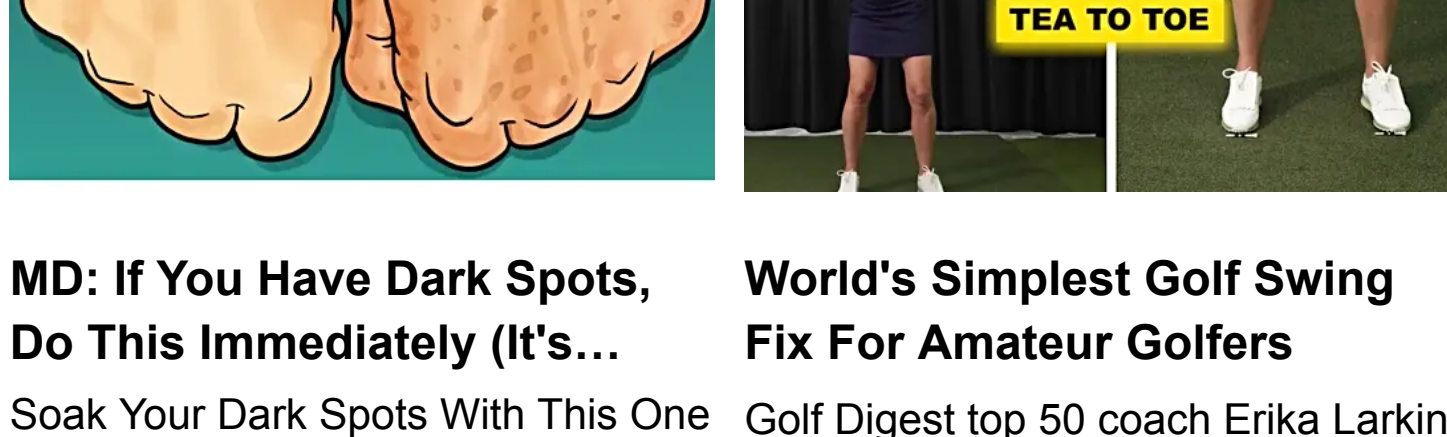
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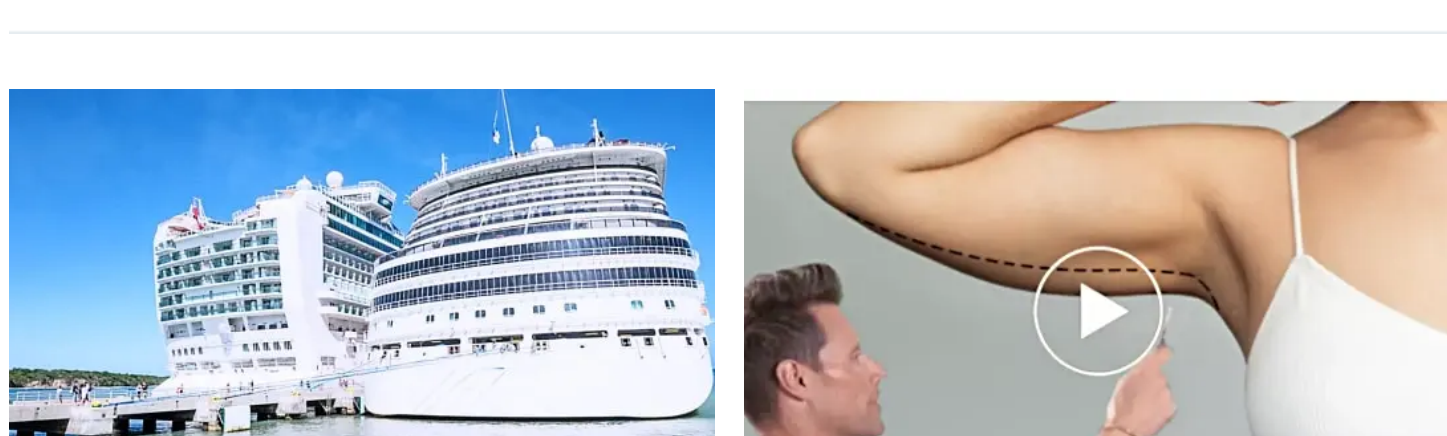


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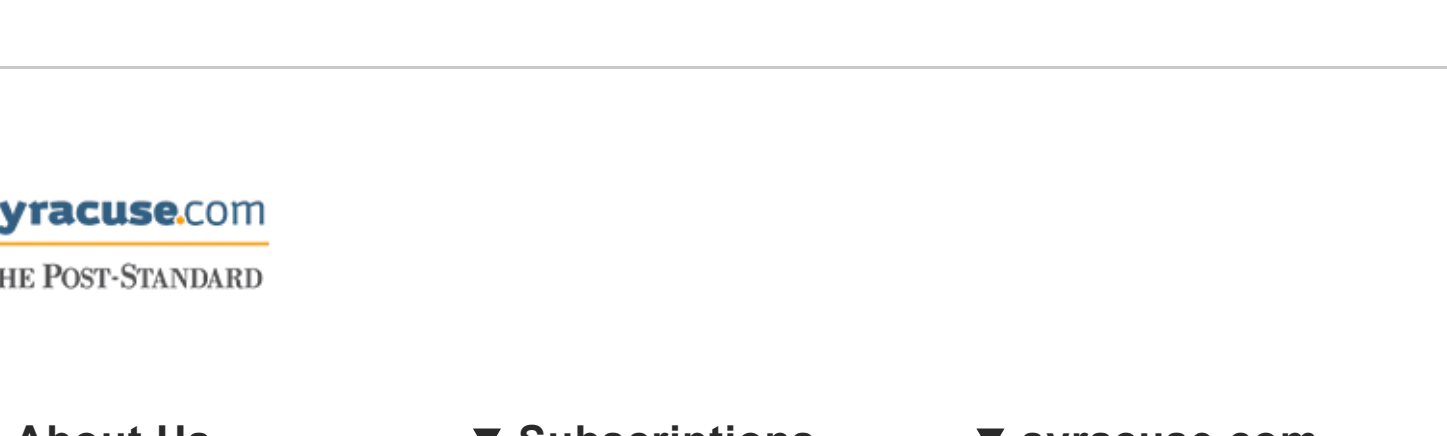
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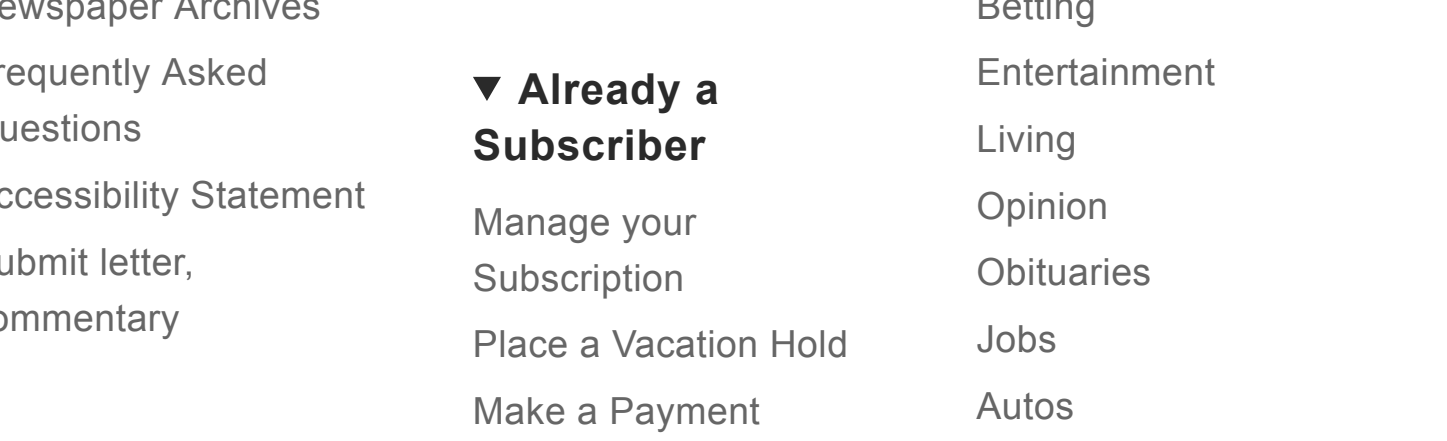
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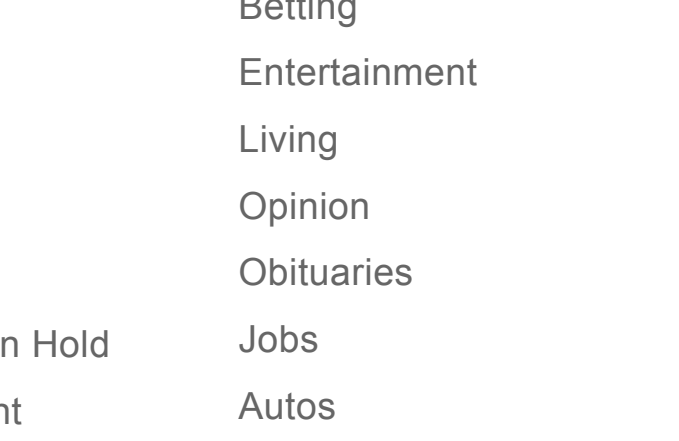


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