



East Bay Chapter: Newsletter November 2025

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NOVEMBER MEETING: November 8:

Saturday, November 8, 2025

Featuring: Meet the Board + more

We are taking this time to introduce the people behind our Chapter. Come meet the board members and learn a bit about us, our hearing loss status and why we chose to serve HLAA-EB. Audience members will also have the opportunity to introduce yourselves and offer some comments. Time permitting, a few board members will offer more extensive comments on their hearing experience in issues/areas such as hearing in noisy environments, audio plasticity, and cochlear implants.

- 9:30 a.m.: Social and Refreshments
- 10:00 a.m.: Presentation (Zoomers can join at 10 am)
- 11:30 a.m.: Complimentary Pizza

**Location: Kaiser Permanente, Fabiola Building,
3801 Howe St, Basement Room G-26,
Oakland, CA.**

FREE PARKING is available across the street at the Kaiser parking structure.

Please come to the in-person meeting to meet the speaker, meet others who have hearing loss and enjoy complementary refreshments.

The meeting is available both In-Person and Virtual (Zoom).

Please register at: www.HearingLossEB.org by 5 PM, Friday, Nov. 7, 2025.

Questions? Info@HearingLossEB.org

HLAA-EB posts our newsletters to the California State Association webpage and a link on our website. **VOLUNTEER! Contact us to let us know you are available!** Check out our website at: <http://www.HearingLossEB.org> Contact us at: Info@HearingLossEB.org

Coming Soon:

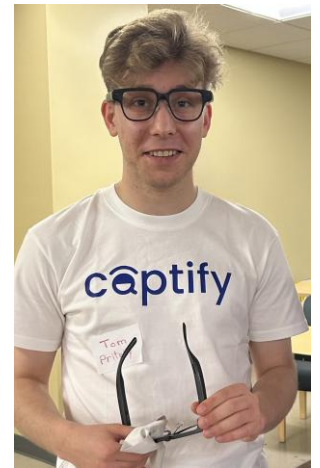
- **December: Dr. Susanah Storm, Blue Sky Hearing – What's new with hearing loss**
- **January, 2026: Brooke Barry, @ UCSF, Spotify research group — Sound and music perception**

NOTE: If you have old hearing aids you no longer use, you may donate them. Drop them off at a meeting and we will make sure your hearing aids get new life for someone else. Also, bring any hearing assistive technology items you no longer use that you may have (such as a Roger Pen or??) to a meeting to see if anyone at the meeting can use them.

MEETING NOTES: *"Captify Captioning Glasses: Seeing Is Believing for People with Hearing Loss"*

At our Oct. 11, 2025, HLAA-EB Chapter meeting, our guest speaker was Tom Pritsky, founder of Captify Captioning Glasses. See his picture below.

- ***Our Speaker's Background:*** Tom was born with bilateral hearing loss, and his hearing loss was diagnosed at 3 years of age. As he grew older into adulthood, he decided to search for better ways to hear and follow conversations. As he was studying at Stanford University, Tom committed to finding a solution – not just for himself, but also for the many other individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- ***Captify Captioning Glasses Features:*** Tom's latest innovation is Captify, which uses augmented reality (AR) and artificial intelligence (AI) to deliver smart glasses real-time captioning, helping to bridge communication gaps across hearing loss and language barriers. Captify Captioning Glasses are designed specifically for captions, while offering features like microphones for noise cancellation and language translation.
- ***Captify Team Members:*** Initially, Tom introduced the members of Captify's team:>
 - ✓ ***Tom Pritsky*** (Co-founder & CEO), Stanford, B.S., M.S.



- ✓ **Jason Gui:** (Co-founder & CTO), Penn., B.S., AI.S., Forbes 30 Under 30.
 - ✓ **Dr. Michael Snyder:** Stanford Center for Genomics & Personal Medicine, Co-founder of 8 start-ups.
 - ✓ **Dr. Gerald Popellea:** Co-inventor of Digital Hearing Aid.
- **Statistics on Hearing Loss:** Before moving on, Tom wanted to remind us of the major growing global issue of hearing loss. He cited supportive statistics which are indicative that 1.5 billion people worldwide today suffer from hearing loss. It's estimated that by 2050, 2.5 billion people worldwide, that's 1 in 4 persons will experience some degree of hearing loss. Obviously, this is a huge problem, particularly since hearing loss is the #1 modifiable risk factor for dementia.
 - **Benefits & Limitations of Captify Captioning Glasses:** Moving forward, Tom described the many benefits of Captify Captioning Glasses.:
 - ✓ Translation of speech into text with 96% accuracy.
 - ✓ Supports multiple languages, including Spanish-English translation.
 - ✓ 4-5 hours of battery life.
 - ✓ 37-minute charging time.
 - ✓ Works best in quiet environments up to 74 decibels.
 - ✓ Can handle background noise in settings such as restaurants & movies.
 - ✓ Ability to provide the wearer with customized options, such as:
 - Prescription lenses.
 - Progressive lenses.
 - Clip-on sunglasses.
 - **Limitations of Captify Captioning Glasses:** Yet, Tom acknowledged that there currently exist a few limitations in using Captify Captioning Glasses:
 - ✓ Limited performance in very noisy environments.
 - ✓ Require an Internet connection for most accurate transcription.
 - ✓ Don't work so well in listening to music.
 - ✓ Could be too distracting to wear when driving.
 - **Comparison of Captify to Other Captioning Glasses:** In spite of the identified limitations of Captify glasses, Tom believes that Captify Pro's smart glasses with their "superior features" compare quite favorably with other competitive name-brand smart glasses presently in the marketplace. For example:

- ✓ Centered in your FOV vs. an uncomfortable reading position.
 - ✓ Dual displays vs. using only one eye at a time.
 - ✓ High quality directional microphones vs. standard phone mics.
 - ✓ Built-in speakers vs. no speakers.
 - ✓ One button captioning vs. multi-step menus.
 - ✓ Large bold readable captions vs. limited caption size options.
 - ✓ Light-weight lenses & frames vs. heavier bulky glasses.
- **Question & Answer Session:** Before wrapping up his presentation, Tom opened up the floor to questions and comments from audience members. Although there was a range of questions, many of them were inquiries as to how well the Captify glasses might work with the individual's particular hearing and eyesight issues. Tom responded briefly to each person's situation, directing them to the personalized demonstration to follow his presentation.
- ✓ **Pricing:** Other questions had to do with pricing of Captify Captioning Glasses. While Tom did not cite specific prices for Captify smart glasses, he did say that their costs fell well within the range of other smart glasses on the market and that different features of the glasses had varying prices. Tom said there may be potential trade-up programs for customers. He also provided some information on purchasing options, including HSA/FSA reimbursement funds and possibly vision insurance coverage.
 - ✓ **Availability:** In response to questions about availability of Captify Captioning Glasses, Tom noted that Captify smart glasses are available for purchase worldwide through their website or at Pacific Hearing Service locations in the Bay Area with support available via live chat, phone and email.
 - ✓ **HIPAA Compliance & Data Storage:** There were also questions raised about potential applications of Captify smart glasses in clinical settings and concerns about HIPAA compliance, data storage, and medical terminology recognition. Tom addressed these issues by explaining their local data storage, HIPAA-approved streaming model and on-going attempts to make improvements in speech recognition.
- **Wrap-Up:** In wrapping up his very interesting presentation, our guest speaker Tom Pritsky thanked everyone for the opportunity to share his exciting product Captify Captioning Glasses. He said they had helped him to

deal with his own bilateral hearing loss, as well as many others who have discovered their usefulness in living a full life, even with their hearing loss.



Tom then invited individuals in the audience who were interested to step forward for a brief personalized try-on demonstration of how a pair of Captify smart glasses might work for them. Remarkably, almost all in-person audience members hastened to get in line for their chance to see how well the Captify glasses would work for them. (See Kathy Fairbanks trying out the Captify glasses on left.)

Finally, Tom encouraged anyone who wanted further information or had more questions, to feel free to reach out to him at his contact information provided below. Lastly, the HLAA-EB Chapter leadership reminded everyone that the policy of the Chapter is to not endorse any service, product or person that may have been mentioned or discussed during the current presentation, discussion or follow-up Q & A session.

For More Information/Questions:

Visit: www.Captifycaptioningglasses.com

Call: (559)-672-9884; Email: tom@captify.glass

~ Kathy Fairbanks



We need your help! Can you volunteer? Contact us at: info@hearinglosseb.org

Here is a list of volunteer positions we are seeking to fill:

- **Volunteer Recruiter**: Contact people who said they could volunteer and tell them about volunteer needs. Recruit for those positions.
- **Outreach Coordinator**: Organize a table for our chapter at various street fairs and other venues. Set up the table. Recruit volunteers to help with the events. Reach out to people who participate in our meetings. Let people know about our chapter.
- **YouTube Channel Creator**: Establish a chapter YouTube channel for meeting recordings.
- **Webmaster**: Maintain and improve the chapter website. Current developed using the Wix platform.
- **Just want to help?** All of our committees need helpers! All volunteers are welcome! Contact us and we'll help you figure out what would be a good fit for you.

HLAA SF/East Bay Leaders

The Board of Directors:

Contact us at: info@hearinglosseb.org

President: Len Bridges

Vice President: Peter Townsend

Secretary: Linda Gee

Treasurer: Len Bridges

Director of Technology: George Chin, Sr.

Director of Membership: Connie Gee

Co-Director of Programs: Robin Miller

Co-Director of Programs: Verna Dow

Co-Director of Newsletters: Nancy Asmundson

Co-Director of Newsletters: Kathy Fairbanks

Director of Publicity: Marlene Muir

Director at Large: Jay Mumford

Consulting Legal Counsel: Gerald Niesar

Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART) services: Audrey Spinka

Facebook Guru: Kate Laws

JOIN HEARING LOSS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA (HLAA) – THEY ADVOCATE FOR YOU!

hearingloss.org Membership is now open to all of our valued supporters who help fuel our mission and change the lives of people with hearing loss. **Everyone who gives is now an HLAA member, helping to amplify our HLAA voice, and fulfill our important mission— together!**

COST OF MEMBERSHIP: The HLAA national office had consolidated the donation and membership processes. Presently, anyone who donates as little as \$1 would become a member of the national HLAA. Additionally, with a donation of \$45 annually, individuals have the option to receive a hard copy of the Hearing Life magazine from the national office.