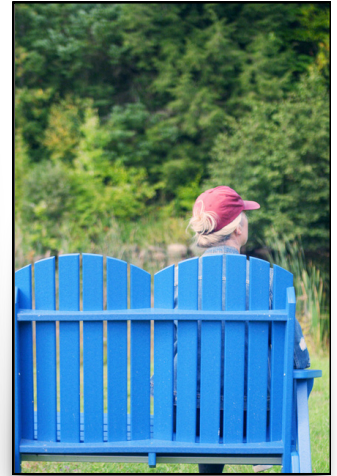


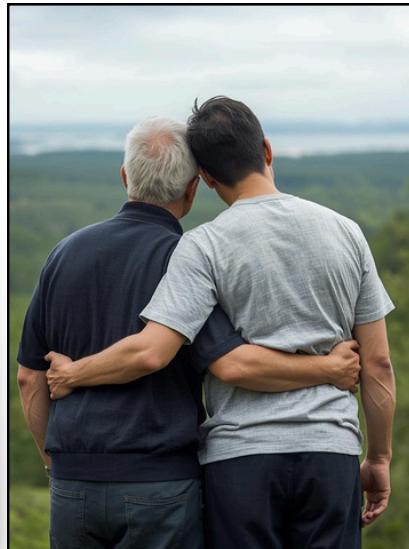
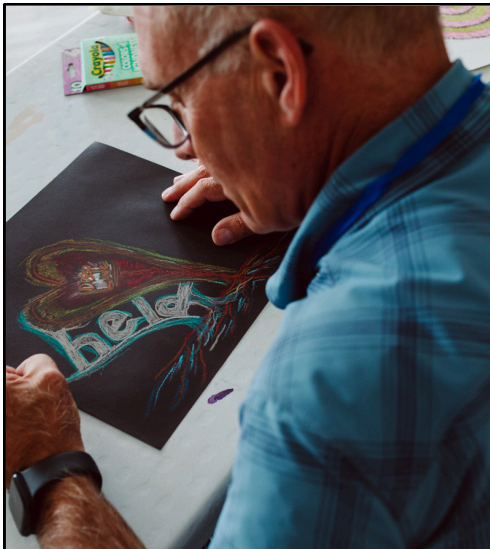


**Brooksong**  
RETREAT & CANCER  
SUPPORT CENTRE



# 2025 IMPACT REPORT

*Our Deepening Story*





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## A Message from the Chair

It is my great pleasure to share this year's Impact Report for Brooksong Retreat and Cancer Support Centre.

Brooksong was created from a bold and compassionate idea: that those living with cancer deserve more than treatment alone. They deserve a place to breathe deeply, to reconnect with themselves, and to find strength in the presence of others who understand their journey.

This past year has been one of meaningful progress and growing momentum. Each retreat we host affirms the power of our vision. Guests and caregivers arrive carrying the weight of diagnosis, treatment, and uncertainty. They leave having discovered moments of peace, resilience and connection. Our signature 'Warm Hug from the Highlands' initiative where people with cancer in our community receive a beautiful quilt as well as our online programs, remind us that healing happens in many forms – in nature, in community and in the simple gift of time to rest and reflect.

But Brooksong is still in the early chapters of its story.

As we look to the future, we see tremendous possibility. Our goal is not simply to sustain Brooksong, but to grow its impact so that many more individuals, caregivers and families facing cancer can benefit from these retreats. Your belief in this work is what allows us to offer these retreats at no cost to participants, ensuring that financial barriers never stand in the way of healing.

Our staff, volunteers, donors, partners and board members form the heart of this community. Your generosity and commitment are helping transform a beautiful place into a lasting sanctuary of healing.

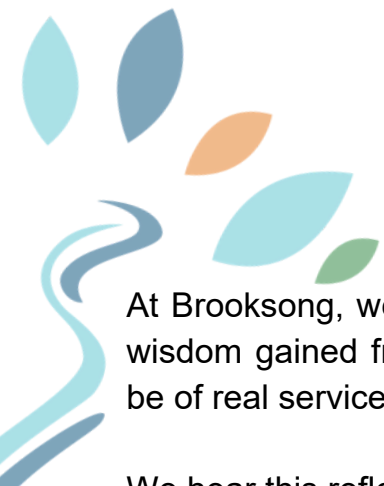
As we look ahead, we do so with both humility and optimism.

The need for what Brooksong offers continues to grow, and with that need comes opportunity. Together, we are shaping a future where Brooksong stands as a beacon of compassion – as place where people affected by cancer can rediscover strength, hope and restorative power of nature. Thank you for walking this path with us

With gratitude and optimism,



Chair of the Board of Directors  
Brooksong Retreat and Cancer Support Centre



At Brooksong, we are continually reminded that it is not our expertise but rather the wisdom gained from our own suffering, vulnerability, and healing that enables us to be of real service to others.

We hear this reflected in the voices of participants. As one person shared:

*“At Brooksong I learned from other people’s experiences of cancer and consoled myself that I am not alone. I learned to believe in myself.”*

2025 was a year of important capacity building for Brooksong as we worked strategically to strengthen the foundation needed to sustain and deepen the care we offer to people living with cancer and the broader community of caregivers, facilitators, volunteers, and supporters who are part of this work. We made meaningful progress in building our fundraising confidence, strengthening our facilitator community, honouring the contributions of our volunteers, growing local and alumni cancer support programs, and building strong community and funder partnerships. So much of this is made possible through the dedication and care of our small, deeply committed staff team.

Again and again, we are reminded that Brooksong is not something we are building alone. It is shaped collectively through the care, insight, and participation of facilitators, volunteers, donors, and program participants.

In the pages that follow, you will see how this work comes to life, reflecting a deeply connected ecosystem of care and an ever-learning, compassionate and inclusive community taking shape around it.

With gratitude,

Executive Director  
Brooksong Retreat and Cancer Support Centre

# 2024-2027 Strategic Priorities

## ● **Enhance Financial Sustainability**

Securing sustainable funding is paramount for Brooksong's continued success. Without enhanced financial sustainability the organization will be challenged in effectively fulfilling its mission.

## ● **Expand Program and Services**

With meticulous planning and a relentless focus on continuous improvement, Brooksong has cultivated exceptional programs. These programs are deeply rooted in research, imbued with an understanding of the needs of Brooksong's participants, and are continually fine tuning based on participant and facilitator experiences and feedback.

## ● **Enhance Governance Effectiveness**

Effective governance at Brooksong hinges on robust leadership and succession planning. This is a pivotal area as it ensures the organization's continuity, preserving the progress achieved thus far.

## ● **Strengthen Marketing & Outreach Efforts**

Building awareness and meaningful connections is essential to Brooksong's growth, expanding our presence and relationships so more people can discover Brooksong and feel welcomed into the care and community we are cultivating. Maintaining a clear and consistent brand, grounded in an authentic expression of Brooksong's values and way of being.

## ● **Promote Inclusivity and Diversity**

Dedication to fostering inclusivity, accessibility, equity, and diversity for all participants, volunteers and staff through training and ongoing learning.

## ● **Enhance Operational Efficiency**

Efficiency is a critical aspect of Brooksong's growth strategy. As a small non-profit, Brooksong recognizes that limited resources require a keen focus on operational effectiveness.



## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

### 8 In-Person Retreats

*“My experience at Brooksong changed the way I feel about myself, my partner and our future together as we face our cancer journey. I so appreciate all the people, resources, wisdom, and expertise that has gone into creating such an important and supportive retreat.” — Stella*

**82 Participants**  
(44% increase from 2024)

100% found rest and renewal through at least one wellness modality

98% felt an opportunity to build meaningful community and connections

95% report new insights, skills, clarity, or information from at least one modality

Many alumni express a strong desire to remain engaged with Brooksong’s mission



### Facilitator Community of Practice



**30 Facilitators**

4 new facilitators in 2025

500 hours of training collectively in 2025, including Trauma-Informed Care with an Indigenous Lens

1 in-person training retreat

Bi-monthly gatherings to strengthen connection and skills

## A Warm Hug from the Highlands



**75 quilts gifted to people in the Haliburton Highlands living with cancer in 2025 (25% increase)**

Handmade by over 60 volunteers

12–15 hours of volunteer time per quilt

900+ hours of volunteer quilting time

Quilt retail value: \$275 each

Representing over \$20,000 in retail value and care beyond measure

*"I am so appreciative for the quilt, it was a lovely and comforting blanket while I was wrapping up my cancer treatments, and while I was taking time to recover after. It is such a thoughtful and reassuring gift from Brooksong and the quilting volunteers! Thank you so much, I continue to use it!"*

–Ben, Quilt Recipient



## Emerging Programs

Brooksong began to respond to emerging needs in new ways:

- Developed plans for an **online alumni support** initiative to be launched in 2026
- Designed a three-day **retreat for individuals attending without a support person** (piloted in 2025)
- Began conversations to co-create a **local monthly cancer support circle** with local residents and HHHS Community Support Services (to be launched in April 2026)

## Research and Evaluation

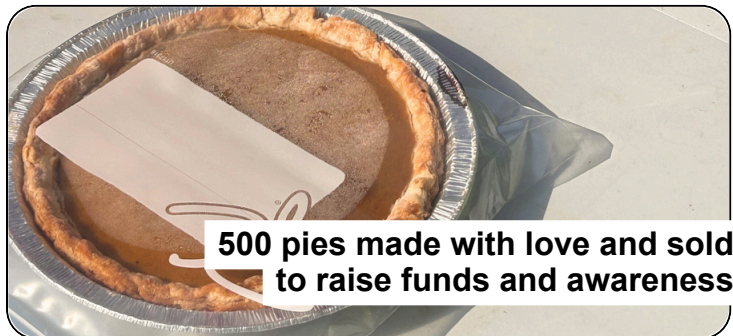
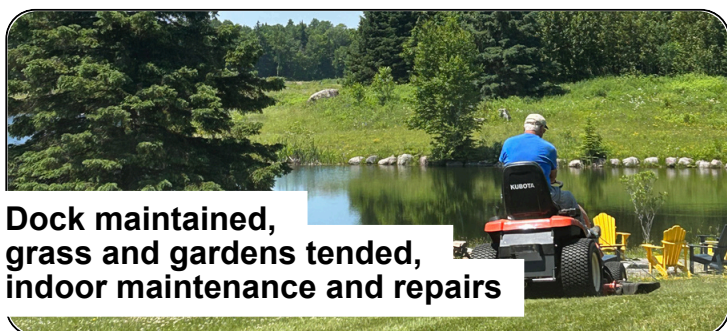
Brooksong initiated a more rigorous research and evaluation plan in partnership with leading researchers, with the goal of deepening our understanding of program outcomes and contributing to the evidence base for whole-person cancer care.

*“Brooksong offered me a rare and beautiful balance—the quiet space for personal reflection and healing, and the powerful embrace of a supportive, compassionate community. I felt truly seen, cared for, and gently held by both the participants and the many hands—seen and unseen—that made it all possible. It was a deeply human, restorative, and heart-opening time that I’ll carry with me always.” –Mary*

# WHAT VOLUNTEERS MADE POSSIBLE IN 2025



## Volunteers In-Action



Every hour, every task, and every act of love helps support people living with cancer and makes it possible for Brooksong to support even more people.

# 6TH ANNUAL SUMMER FUNDRAISER

*Haliburton Highlands Challenge (HHC)*

**A RECORD \$122,700 RAISED!**



**14 Teams, 60+ fundraising volunteers** from all over Ontario (and beyond), and **19 corporate sponsors** joined together to relentlessly pursue a future where **#NoOneWalksAlone** through a cancer experience.

## BEYOND OUR PROGRAMMING *ADDITIONAL 2025 HIGHLIGHTS*

- **Presented with The Warden's Award, at the Haliburton Highlands Chamber of Commerce Gala**, recognizing Brooksong as an exemplary organization that goes above and beyond in making valuable contributions to the local community and making a positive difference in the lives of many residents.

- **Attended the Canadian Association of Psychosocial Oncology (CAPO) conference** as a presenter and had our abstract published in PubMed.



- **Local Community Partnerships and Engagement**  
Brooksong's work continues to be strengthened by the generosity and engagement of our local community. These **collaborations deepen our roots in the community and expand our capacity** to care for individuals and families living with cancer.

The Board of Directors began strategic planning work to renew Brooksong's direction, and strengthen governance and leadership for the years ahead.

Launched in 2025, **Brooksong Days brought together local businesses** such as Heatline, Glecoff's, Hook, Line & Sinkers, Bonnie View Inn, and Sweat Social to raise funds and awareness, **marking the beginning of a growing community-led initiative.**

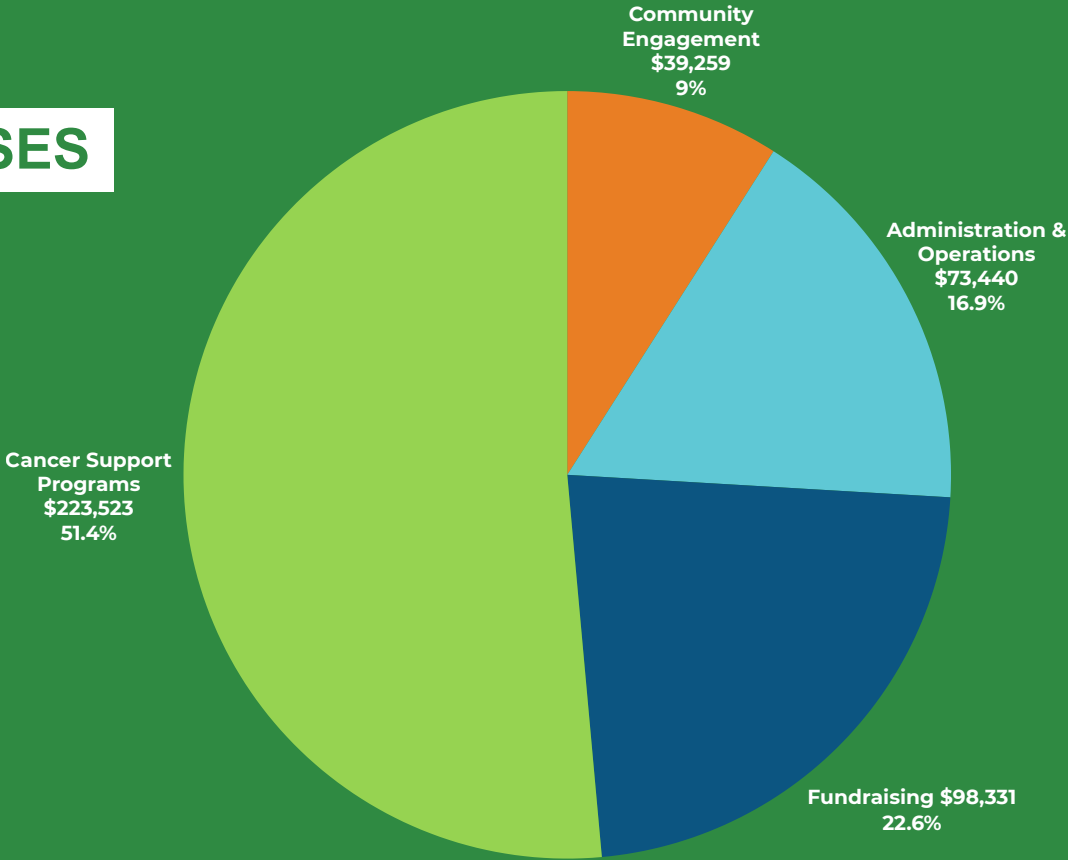
The Rotary Club of Minden's Annual Golf Tournament Fundraiser for Brooksong continues to grow as a great community-building and fundraising event.

Brooksong also **maintained an active presence in the community** through local events, wellness fairs, and gatherings, creating opportunities to connect, share resources, and build relationships with other service organizations.

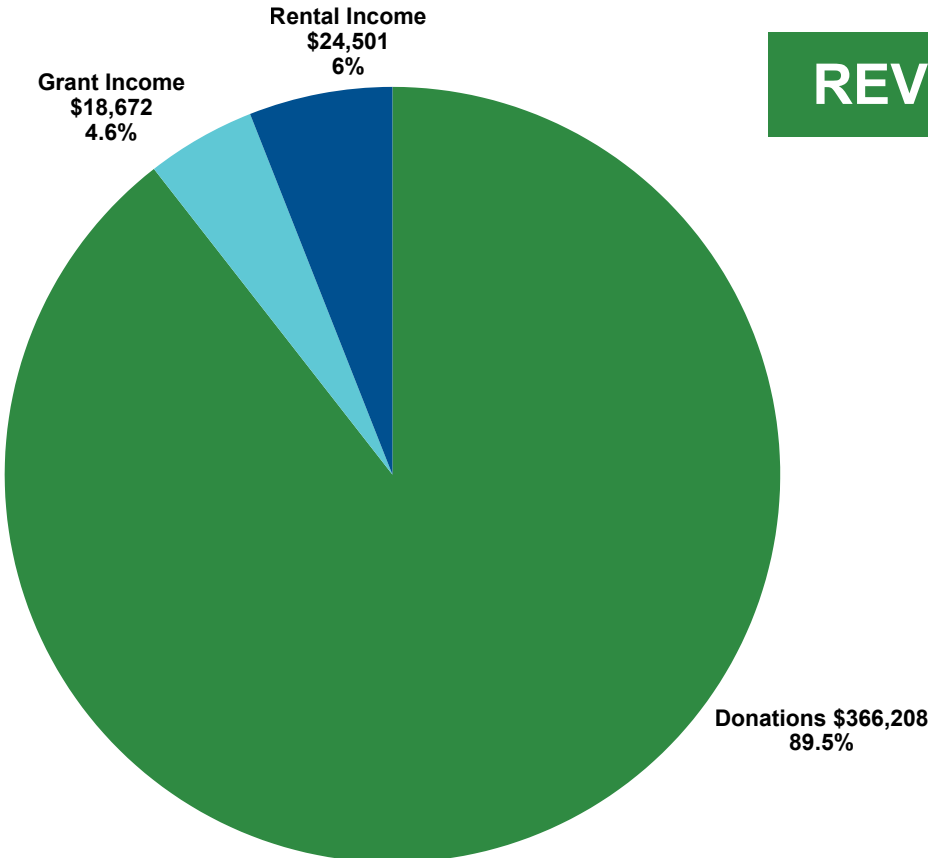
- **Extending our Reach**  
Responded to growing interest from cancer support organizations and healthcare providers across Ontario and beyond, reflecting increasing recognition of Brooksong's approach.

# FINANCIAL SUMMARY

## EXPENSES



## REVENUE



# 2025 Grants Received



Canada Summer Jobs Program to hire 2 summer students.



Canada-Ontario Job Grant enabled our bookkeeper to complete specialized training in nonprofit financial management, strengthening Brooksong's financial stewardship.



The final phase of the HCDC LIP grant enabled trauma-informed training for facilitators, staff, volunteers, and board members, while also supporting the delivery of a retreat focused on end-of-life care.



Provided \$5,000 to help fund cancer support programming.

# 2025 Supporters

The WB Family Foundation



Patterson Institute for Integrative Oncology Research



Over 650 individual donations helped sustain this work in 2025; each one a reflection of the care and commitment of our community.



“Brooksong is a special place filled with love and a unique sense of belonging. There isn't any place like it that I know of.

The hardest part of living through a cancer diagnosis or being a caregiver throughout a cancer journey is the burden we silently carry. Everyone's journey is unique and profound in it's own way. Brooksong offered us an opportunity to lighten that burden, be surrounded by love and for just a few days we got to change our perspectives and remember just how abundant our lives really are.

Cancer is a journey that can often seem lonely and heavy for both the ones living with the diagnosis and the ones dedicated to giving everything to care for them. *Brooksong filled me up when I didn't even realize I was empty. I had given so much of myself to being strong and supportive for my wife that I didn't realize I needed support too.*

Brooksong didn't just give us a retreat, they reconnected us to each other and to ourselves. That is the most impactful medicine there is.”

–Kevin



Scan this QR code to watch our No One Walks Alone mini-documentary produced by Brad Brown at Upside Brown Production Services.