

The Rosalie Whyel Museum of Doll Art is Closing

The Rosalie Whyel Museum of Doll Art will close its doors permanently March 1, 2012. The doll museum, which has been in Bellevue for 19 years, will close next year because of finances.

The museum, located downtown at 1116 108th Ave NE, features collector Rosalie Whyel's collection of dolls from around the world and from antiques to the modern era, as well as traveling exhibits. The museum celebrates its 19th birthday next month.

The doll museum's affiliated storefront Rosie's Too will also close its door on Dec. 31 of this year.

The director, Rosalie Whyel, in a newsletter to museum members said that finances are forcing the closure of the museum.

"We are sadly not alone in this predicament as we have all watched twelve other doll museums nationally and worldwide close their doors in the last few years," she wrote in the newsletter. "However, it doesn't make it easier, of course."

The museum will continue to hold events through next year, including a National Antique Doll Dealers Association antique doll sale, several exhibits and the museum birthday celebration. The museum staff also is documenting the collection, said Abby Kaminski, Events and Marketing Coordinator for the museum.

"The mission for the Museum when we first began to envision and plan it was to provide a lovely and comfortable environment for our visitors and a safe and secure environment for the dolls and toys while sharing them in a fun, nostalgic and educational way," Whyel wrote. "Considering this, we feel we accomplished our goal over the Museum's 19-year history and were successful at it."

The doll museum is not the only Bellevue cultural organization to announce its closure in the wake of financial struggles. The Bellevue Philharmonic earlier this year played its last concert at the Symetra Bellevue Family 4th event in downtown park, after announcing that the Philharmonic was having difficulty raising money.