

# Shock, waiting follow latest Nepal Earthquake



by Ty Beaver – Tri-City Herald

Tuesday's earthquake in Nepal, the latest and most destructive since another shook the Himalayan nation in late April, could have been worse for some Tri-City-connected families.

Ang Dorjee Sherpa, a former Richland resident who has summited Mount Everest 17 times, is safe, his wife told the Herald. He'd returned to Nepal to help his mother and family in the town of Pangboche after the last quake hit.

Two brothers from the U.S. are also OK after returning from a search operation in the Langtang valley before the earthquake. They were searching for their sister Sydney Schumacher and her friend Bailey Meola, who has connections to Richland. Both women are still missing.

Shock and uncertainty remain, however.

Whatever was still standing in the villages of Ang Dorjee's family are now leveled. The latest quake also complicates the ongoing search for Meola and Schumacher, both 19.

"(There were) small clues they were following," Brown said of the U.S. Embassy's search for the women. "But today's earthquake may have created even more obstacles or compromised those leads."

Tuesday's 7.3-magnitude quake, centered in the Khumbu valley between Everest and Kathmandu, was a little weaker and deeper underground than the one that killed thousands and toppled buildings throughout the country on April 25.

Two hours passed between when the latest quake struck and when Ang Dorjee's wife Michelle Gregory, now living in the Netherlands with their two children, had word of his whereabouts.

"I haven't talked to Dorjee but he talked to his niece in Kathmandu and she called me," Gregory said in a message to the Herald. "Phone lines are sporadic at best." Ang Dorjee's mother and sister and other relatives also were safe.

Paul and Will Schumacher, brothers to Sydney Schumacher, had descended from the Langtang valley and returned to Kathmandu just hours before the newest quake hit, Brown said. The men are on their way back to the United States where they will meet with their parents, as well as Brown and her husband, Scott Meola, both Richland High grads.

"The Embassy made the right decision to pull all search teams ... due to poor weather," Brown said.

But the quake has rattled the already reeling nation of Nepal, putting people back on the streets in temporary shelters, disrupting reconstruction work and straining those with loved ones in the country.

“It’s been a long and emotional day,” Gregory said.

Richland’s SIGN Fracture Care International already has sent in medical supplies to help Nepalese surgeons treating earthquake victims. Dr. Lewis Zirkle, SIGN founder and president, and Jeanne Dillner, SIGN CEO, plan to arrive in Nepal on May 30.

SIGN also is preparing to send additional supplies, including the SIGN surgical implants used to treat bone fractures, in the wake of the second earthquake.

The Richland nonprofit already was trying to raise about \$250,000 to cover the cost of sending supplies to Nepal and to donate directly to SIGN’s 11 partner Nepalese hospitals. Those hospitals need help covering the daily living costs for their patients, such as food and medicine.

For more information about SIGN and to donate go to [signfracturecare.org](http://signfracturecare.org). Money also can be sent to SIGN Fracture Care International, 451 Hills St., Suite B, Richland, WA 99354.

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