

To the editor:

As we race the Iron Dog again this year, we'd like to raise awareness of suicide prevention in Alaska. We've got one of the highest rates in the nation, but it doesn't have to be that way.

For a while it was pretty normal to be going to funerals for suicide for me, Tyler, growing up in Galena. I lost my uncle, brother, close friends in high school, after high school, my great great grandpa. It seems like people feel like they're in a standstill in life – they don't have a job, they're not going to school, they get depressed.

When you're not moving, you need to get moving, because life is bigger than right now, right where you're at. When you're at a low point in life, hang on and keep moving forward. When you fall off your snowmachine, you get back on and keep going.

When I, Chris, raced the Iron Dog in 2009, a lot of things went wrong. I think a lot of guys would've given up at that point in their careers. I'm glad I didn't, because the next year, Tyler & I won.

So the message from both of us is, Don't give up. We're pulling for you. If you're down, we want you to get help, and there's help out there if you need it. You can call Careline, the statewide suicide prevention hotline, at 1-877-266-HELP (4357). Or go to their website, CarelineAlaska.com, or text them at 907-2-LISTEN (547836).

Stay safe,

Tyler Huntington, Galena and Fairbanks, and Chris Olds, Eagle River.

February 17, 2011

Chris & Tyler went on to win again in 2011.