

Death Ride survivors have a story to tell

By Brian Nordli, Reno Gazette-Journal

MARKLEEVILLE – It's 5:30 a.m. and the day is just beginning at Turtle Rock Park.

As the sun begins its daily ritual, hundreds of cyclists wearing jerseys and windbreakers that are so bright they could hurt the eyes are unloading their bikes. They are preparing for a journey that hundreds more have already started.

Every cyclist brings the same attitude to the start of the Death Ride. With 129 miles to go and 15,000 feet of climbing over five peaks in the California Alps, they are optimistic.

There were more than 3,000 participants in Saturday's daylong ride, which stretched well into evening for some. They were hoping to hit each of the five checkpoints, receive the colored sticker that serves as confirmation for each summit and at the end the elusive pin that comes with a finished ride.

But in a ride this difficult, motivation is more personal. Some want to cross it off their bucket list, others are riding to complete unfinished business and others still do it to honor the wish of a family they've never met.

Read the whole story