

"Ideas were being circulated and exchanged," Margolis said. "People began questioning."

The next day, a UNC student misidentified as one of the riders was hit in the face by taxi drivers after conversing with a black woman, The Daily Tar Heel reported.

Bill Woestendiek, who was editor of the DTH, also joined the group that came to assist the riders.

On Thursday of that week, Woestendiek ran an editorial on the front page about the attacks.

"Shameful and disgraceful are mild words to describe the above-mentioned pages from the never-ending story of discrimination," the editorial said. As Woestendiek told it, students stood guard on the porch of the minister's home.

"People outside the house were yelling the usual things, 'nigger lovers,' stuff like that," he said Thursday in a phone interview.

The riders were driven by car to Greensboro, and the pastor and his family left town.

"The townspeople of what was the bastion of liberal thinking in those days ... threw rocks at us because we were defending the liberty of black people," said Woestendiek, who went on to a career as a journalist.

Bettie Jones Bradford, the pastor's daughter, was 12 at the time and saw the people throwing rocks outside her home but said she was not scared until later that night when the family packed clothes into the car and left town under cover of darkness.

Her father took an indirect route and left the headlights off in case they were followed, she said.

"I know Mom and Dad were nervous because my mother kept looking around," Bradford said.

Guests of other races were a normal affair in Jones' house.

One of those arrested was Bayard Rustin, a black rider who became prominent within the civil rights movement, organizing the 1963 March on Washington.

Bradford said that although race relations today are far from ideal, they have come a long way since the days of segregated busing.

"Now you look at Barack Obama running for president. That would have never happened back then."