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Trump makes case for GOP at Texas convention

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President Donald Trump defended his White House record, blasted Democrats' ideas as dangerous and tried to energize his base Wednesday night at an unprecedented midterm gathering that seeks to mitigate tough election odds for Republicans.

Trump promised attendees that he would campaign for competitive races across the country. The president said he will return to Texas to campaign for Attorney General Ken Paxton, who's in a tight, high-profile race for U.S. Senate against Democrat James Talarico.

"I'll be coming back to Texas because we have to elect Ken Paxton," Trump said.

There could even be multiple visits, he said: "If I have to, I'll come back twice or three times."

Speaking for nearly two hours, the president acknowledged that midterm years are often lackluster for the political party in the White House. If Democrats perform well enough nationwide, they could take back control of Congress — a fate Republicans are working hard to avoid.

Democratic control of the House and Senate would effectively end any legislative agenda that Trump might want to pursue in his final two years. And it could expose him to investiga-

SEE CONVENTION, 7A



ABIGAIL DOLLINS Fort Worth Star-Telegram

President Donald Trump gives the keynote address on night one of the 2026 Republican Convention on Wednesday, Sept. 9, 2026 at American Airlines Center in Dallas.



Three New York City firefighters raise an American flag at Ground Zero, site of the World Trade Center, on Sept. 11, 2001.

RICKY FLORES The Journal News/USA TODAY Network via Reuters Connect

On Sept. 11, 2001, a series of terror attacks in New York, Washington D.C., and Pennsylvania carved scars across our nation that continue to heal. To mark the anniversary, we pause to reflect on the tragedy of that day and the triumphs that rose from the ashes.

Inside: Read the story of a firefighter and the man he couldn't save, learn about the ways 9/11 changed our world, and see unforgettable images of loss and heroism.

Special section in Edition: Expanded coverage of the 25th anniversary, with more in-depth stories and striking visuals, can be found by visiting star-telegram.com/edition.

Online: View a photo story of enduring images of Sept. 11 and its aftermath, and search a Legacy database of victims. star-telegram.com.

Retirees share vivid 9/11 memories in new book

BY MATTHEW ADAMS
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A quarter of a century has passed, but John Cecconi can still recall with vivid, haunting detail what it was like to be in Manhattan on Sept. 11, 2001, the day two hijacked commercial airplanes hit the World Trade Center's twin towers.

And just as poignantly, Cecconi can remember how it felt after that tragic day, which began a new chapter for any American old enough to witness, even from afar, the destruction in New York City, as well as at the Pentagon outside Washington, D.C., and in a field near Shanksville, Pa.

"We were never the same as far as our rosy outlook," Cecconi said.

Today, the Bronx-raised Cecconi resides at the Stevenson Oaks senior living community in Fort Worth. But in 2001, he was a hospital administrator in New York City, and his story is one of more than two dozen that fellow Stevenson Oaks resident Larry Beck compiled into a new book to honor the 25th anniversary of the 9/11 terror attacks.

When American Airlines Flight 11 hit the North Tower of the World Trade Center at 8:46 a.m. Eastern time on Sept. 11, Cecconi was at his office on East 72nd Street, roughly five miles north of the impact.

At first, Cecconi didn't believe reports that a plane had hit the tower. He was a licensed pilot, and he couldn't see how anyone could crash into the tallest building in the city on such a beautiful, cloudless day.



AMANDA MCCOY FORT WORTH STAR-TELEGRAM

Larry Beck, center, has published a book of remembrances of 9/11 that features stories from fellow residents of the of other Stevenson Oaks retirement community. It includes experiences from Monta Noe, left, and John Cecconi, right.

Seventeen minutes later, United Airlines Flight 175 hit the World Trade Center's South Tower. Cecconi went outside and saw a column of smoke billowing up from the tip of Manhattan.

A little more than a half hour after that, a third plane, American Airlines Flight 77, slammed into the Pentagon. Just past 10 a.m. Eastern, United Airlines

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