PANGRAM COMPETITION

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If typists ever want a replacement for the old chestnut "The quick brown fox jumped over the lazy dog," do I have some suggestions! Below are my favorite sentences submitted by National Public Radio "Weekend Edition Sunday" listeners in a creative pangram competition on September 22 and 29, 2002. Each sentence uses all 26 letters of the alphabet at least once (that’s a pangram) and contains the name of a famous person (the extra requirement of the contest). Out of thousands of entries, I selected the following on the basis of brevity, meaning, naturalness of syntax, and (sometimes) their ability to make me smile. All the winners use 40 or fewer letters; the grand prizewinner has only 30. A few entries were even shorter, but none read so smoothly.

G. W. Bush quickly fixed prize jam on TV (30) Gordon Gerwig
Beloved Groucho joked with a mix of zany quips (38) Grant Griffin
Foxy Gen. Schwarzkopf jumbled Iraqi TV (32) Daniel A. Martinez
Jeb Bush quit work on crazy Florida voting mixup (40) Dot Barr
John Quincy Adams grew vexed by talk of puzzles (39) A.J. Demetra
My expensive quartz watch once belonged to JFK (39) Barbara Mandel
Watch "Jeopardy," Alex Trebek’s fun TV quiz game (37) Peter Mowrey

A good, quick jab of a pen may vex Will Shortz (35) Jo LoBiondo
Bad Joaquin Phoenix wrecks zingy TV film (34) Mike Weepie
Fax back Jim’s Gwyneth Paltrow video quiz (34) Ken Neunzig
Fixing the razor, J.S. Bach vowed to primp quickly (39) Marcia Marvin
Foxy but quick John Leguizamo ponders view (36) Edwin C. Kruse
Foxy Tariq Aziz vows to pack enough jade marbles (40) Gerry Cechony
Gen. Schwarzkopf’s job quietly vexed him (33) Jim Tyrrell
Gorbachev’s quixotic plan fazed jumpy hawks (37) Albert Tumpson
Jeez, by TV film Schwarzkopf expunged Iraq (35) C. Vaughn Stetzenmuller
Lawbooks forgave John Quincy Adams, sixth prez (39) Alan Inkenbrandt
Mozart’s jawing quickly vexed a fat bishop (35) Ben Hochman
Putin backs away from Iraq zeal; Bush, vexed, jogs (39) Alan Hirshfeld
Queen Elizabeth’s major picked five sexy wigs (38) Paul Hadavas
Queen Elizabeth’s proxy waved off Mick Jagger (38) Daniel A. Martinez
Quickly Shortz dreams up a few vexing jumbles (38) Gertrude Beal
Quincy Jones vowed to fix the bleak jazz program (40) Julie Levin
Quip-crazy Gorbachev went and mixed flapjacks (39) Tony White
Schwarzkopf vexed Iraq big-time in July (33) William F. Pahle
Seiji Ozawa quit, vexing rabid symphonic folk (38) Adam Hirshfeld
Sexy diva Jennifer Lopez wasn’t baking me quiche (40) Al Gori
The big plump jowls of zany Dick Nixon quiver (37) Ruth Bell
Then a cop quizzed Mick Jagger’s ex-wives briefly (40) Donna de Vries
TV folk buy ex-prez John Quincy Adams’ wig (33) Susan Petry
Whacky pangram quiz flummoxed Steve Jobs (35) Janet McDonald
What deaf banjo player gives Max Planck quartz? (39) N. James Carson