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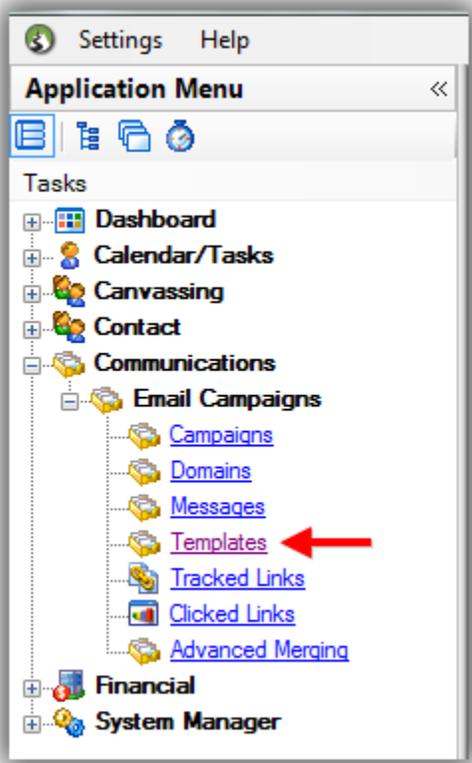
Overview

This article will show you how to create a **custom thank-you auto-responder email** for your online donation form. It then shows how to **activate the email** within the Website Configuration area of the application. This process can be repeated for the other [iFrame forms](#) and [custom forms](#) that you build with **Trail Blazer**.

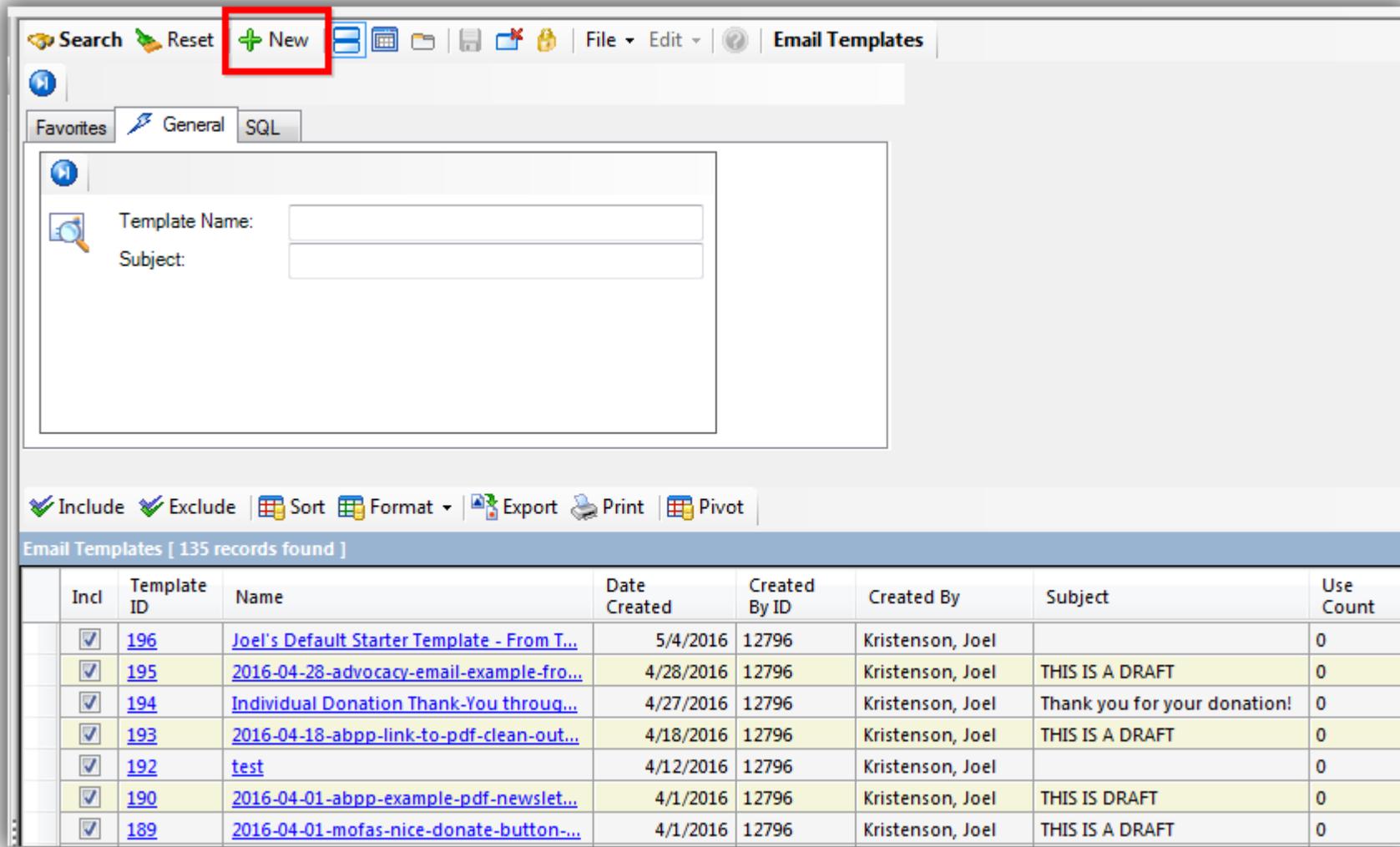
 **Tip:** If you prefer video tutorials [this link](#) on our **YouTube Channel** provides a concise walkthrough on this task.

Steps

Navigate to the **Templates List** under the Application Menu. *Requires appropriate [security clearance](#).*



Click the **[+ New]** button on the search tool strip.

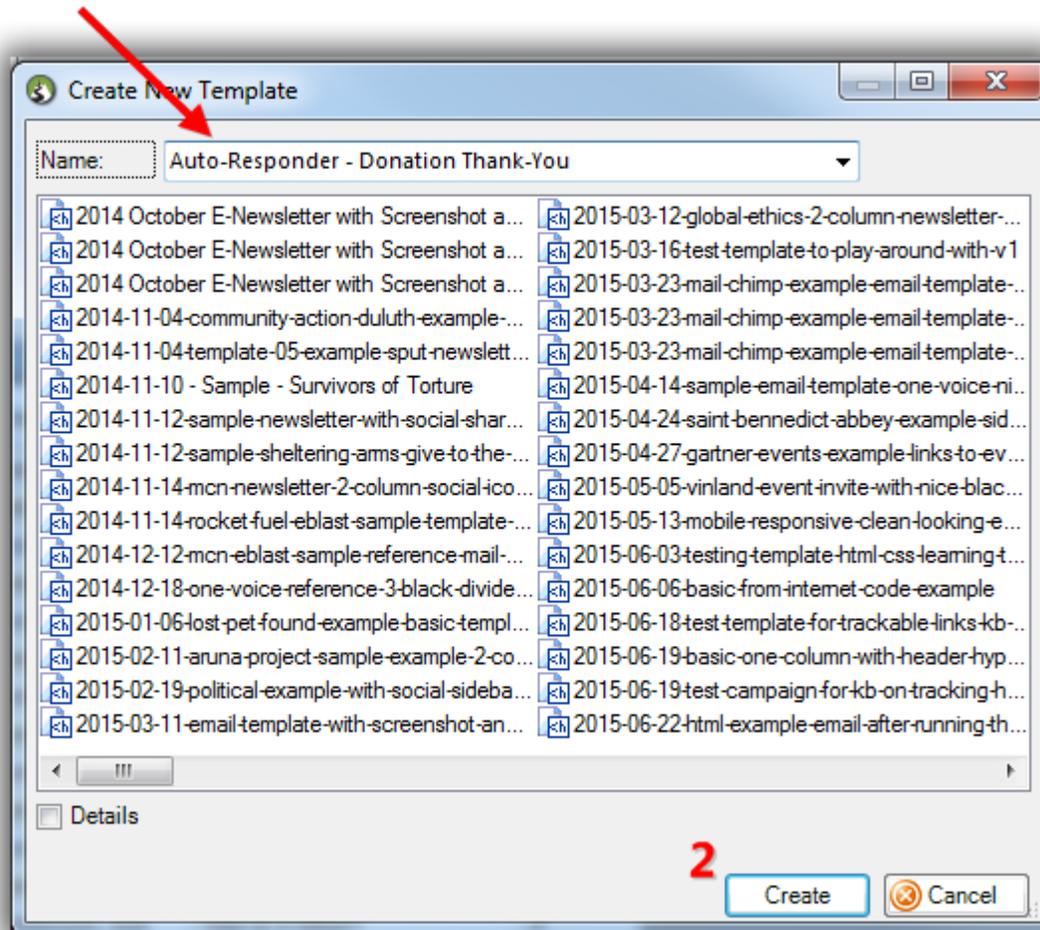


The screenshot shows the 'Email Templates' management interface. The top toolbar includes buttons for Search, Reset, **New** (highlighted), and other actions. Below the toolbar, there are tabs for 'Favorites', 'General', and 'SQL'. A form is visible with input fields for 'Template Name:' and 'Subject:'. At the bottom, a table displays a list of templates.

Incl	Template ID	Name	Date Created	Created By ID	Created By	Subject	Use Count
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	196	Joel's Default Starter Template - From T...	5/4/2016	12796	Kristenson, Joel		0
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	195	2016-04-28-advocacy-email-example-fro...	4/28/2016	12796	Kristenson, Joel	THIS IS A DRAFT	0
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	194	Individual Donation Thank-You throug...	4/27/2016	12796	Kristenson, Joel	Thank you for your donation!	0
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	193	2016-04-18-abpp-link-to-pdf-clean-out...	4/18/2016	12796	Kristenson, Joel	THIS IS A DRAFT	0
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	192	test	4/12/2016	12796	Kristenson, Joel		0
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	190	2016-04-01-abpp-example-pdf-newslet...	4/1/2016	12796	Kristenson, Joel	THIS IS DRAFT	0
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	189	2016-04-01-mofas-nice-donate-button-...	4/1/2016	12796	Kristenson, Joel	THIS IS A DRAFT	0

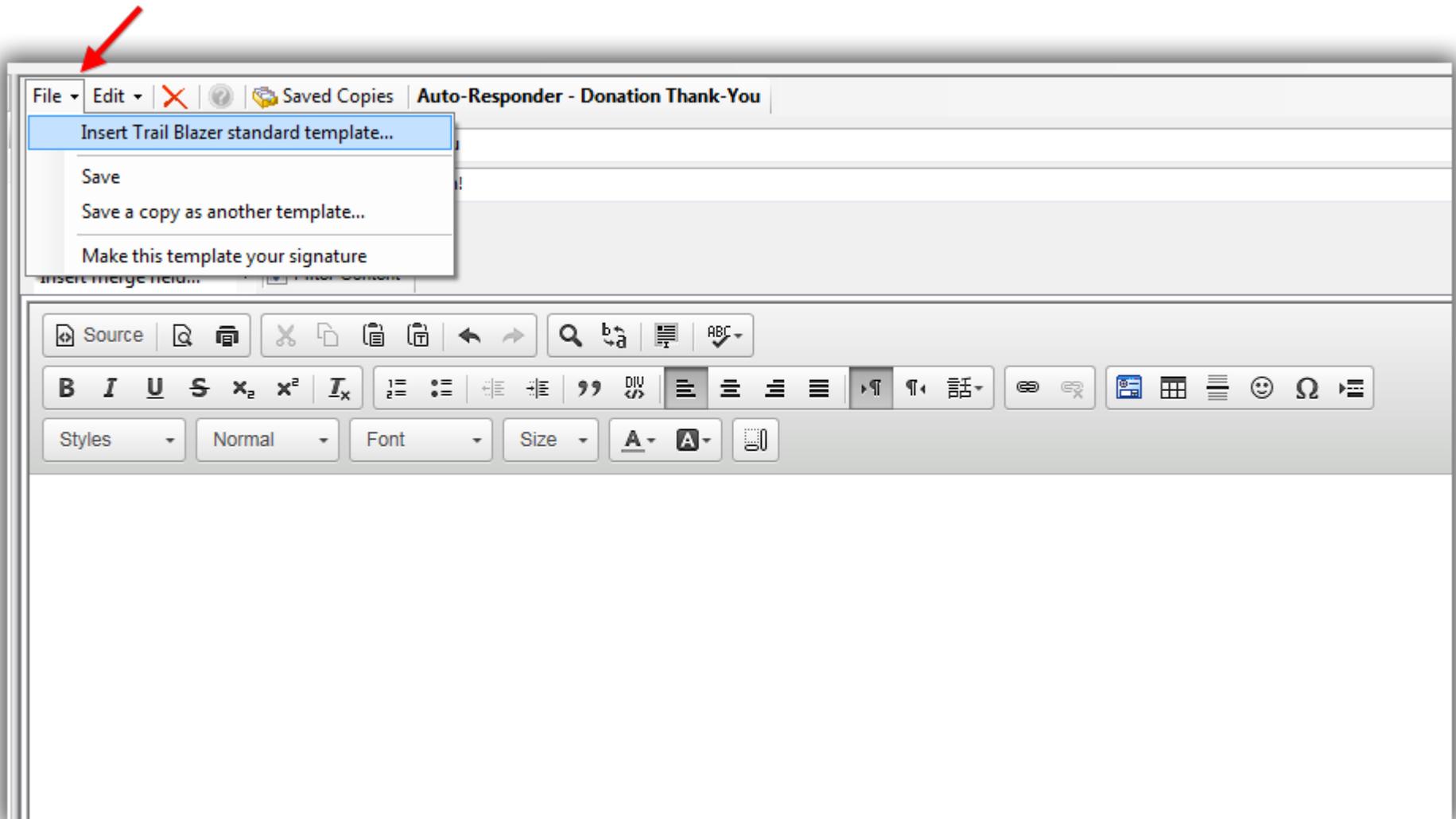
Give the template a **name**, and then click **[Create]**. *In my example I called my “**Auto-Responder – Donation Thank-You**”.*

1. Create a name for your auto-responder email.

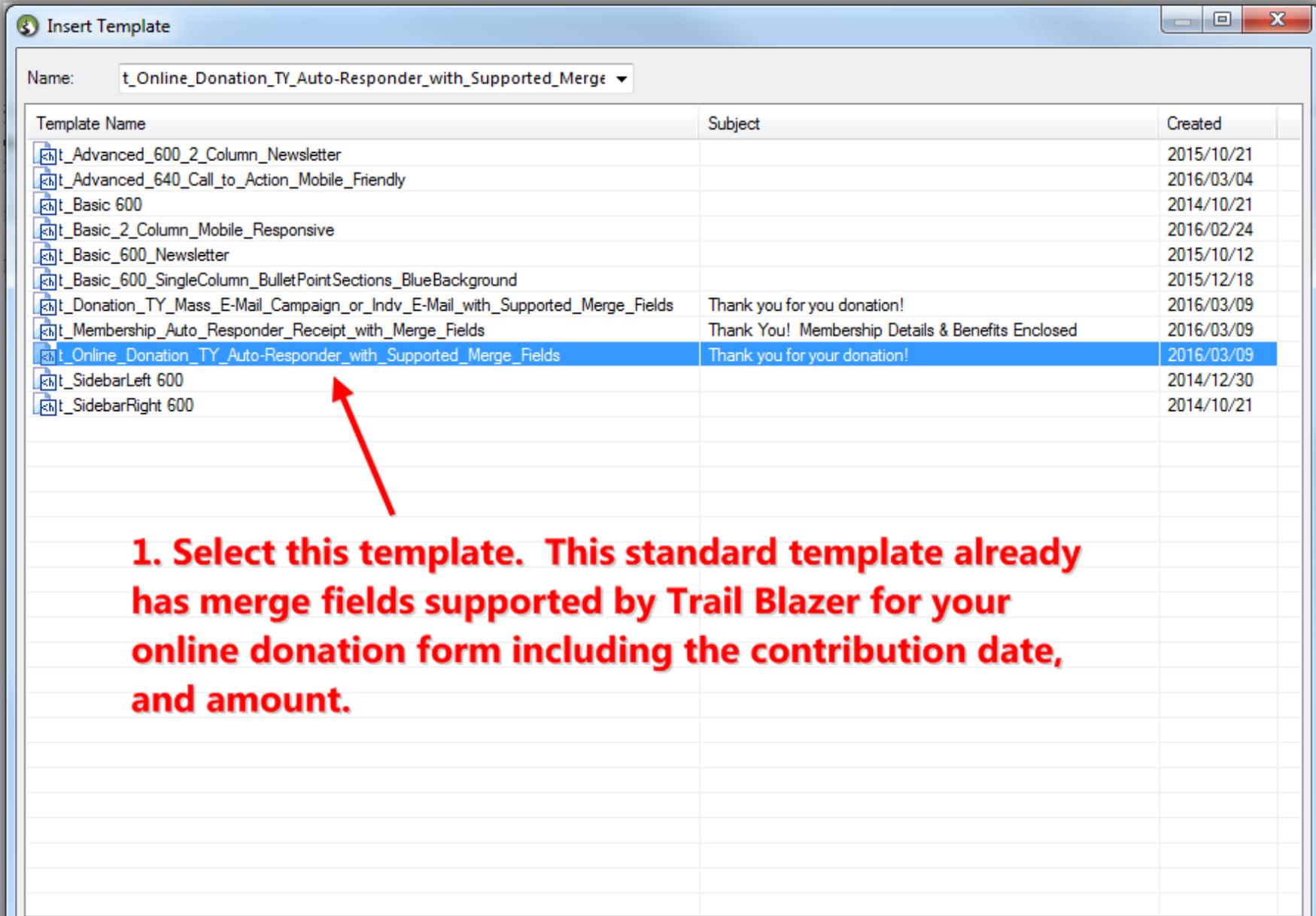


You have a couple of choices at this point you can either [create your own template](#) from scratch or choose from one of the **Standard Trail Blazer** templates. *In this example I opted for the 2nd option, to use one of the [pre-built templates](#) as a starting point, which already has the main **merge fields** needed for a donation thank-you email.*

Click the **File** drop-down in the upper-left, and select **Insert Trail Blazer standard template...**



Select the template for online donations called “**t_Online_Donation_TY_Auto-Responder_with_Supported_Merge_Fields**”, and then click **[Open]**.

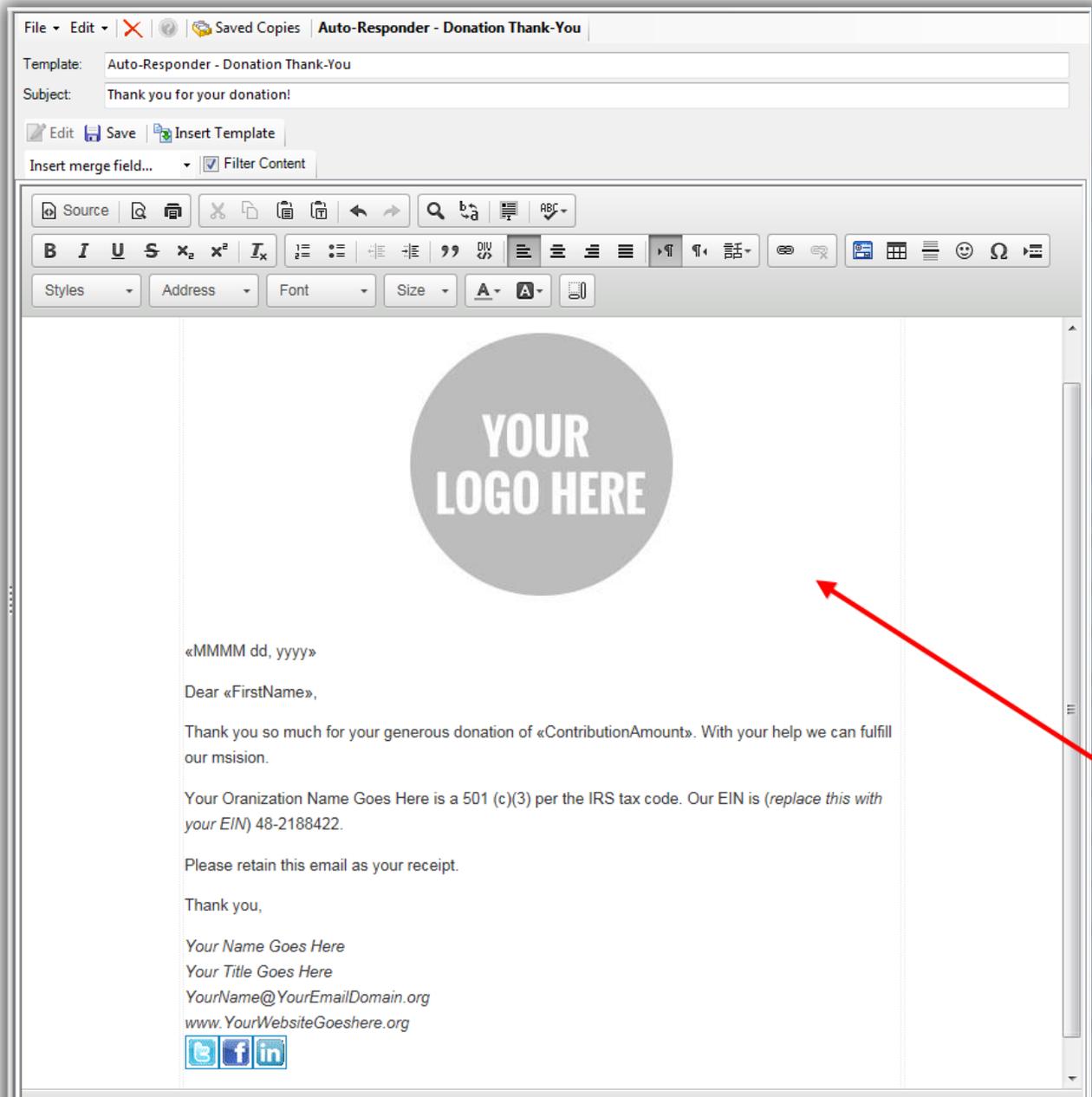


1. Select this template. This standard template already has merge fields supported by Trail Blazer for your online donation form including the contribution date, and amount.

Template Name	Subject	Created
t_Advanced_600_2_Column_Newsletter		2015/10/21
t_Advanced_640_Call_to_Action_Mobile_Friendly		2016/03/04
t_Basic 600		2014/10/21
t_Basic_2_Column_Mobile_Responsive		2016/02/24
t_Basic_600_Newsletter		2015/10/12
t_Basic_600_SingleColumn_BulletPointSections_BlueBackground		2015/12/18
t_Donation_TY_Mass_E-Mail_Campaign_or_Indv_E-Mail_with_Supported_Merge_Fields	Thank you for you donation!	2016/03/09
t_Membership_Auto_Responder_Receipt_with_Merge_Fields	Thank You! Membership Details & Benefits Enclosed	2016/03/09
t_Online_Donation_TY_Auto-Responder_with_Supported_Merge_Fields	Thank you for your donation!	2016/03/09
t_SidebarLeft 600		2014/12/30
t_SidebarRight 600		2014/10/21

Click **[OK]** when prompted about overwriting your current template. *(If you're starting from scratch as I was you don't need to worry about this warning, if you have unfinished work click [Cancel]).*

This is what the standard auto-responder email template should look like when it's first inserted:



The standard Trail Blazer donation auto-responder email with merge fields.

You can now finish the email by completing these steps:

- [Swap out images](#) with your logo, header, footer, signature, and social media icons
- Swap out the **default text**, font styles, etc. to include your own message
- Replace any **hyperlinks** to things like your website, social media pages, etc.

Below is the **list of merge fields** that are currently **supported** in the thank-you auto-responder, as well as a list of those that are **not supported** (*as of the time this article was written*).

These merge fields work:

«FirstName»

«ContributionAmount»

«MMMM dd, yyyy»

«LastName»

«Nick Name or FirstName»

«AddressID»

«Street»

«Street2»

«City»

«State»

«ZipCode»

«Employer»

«Occupation»

«EmailAddress»

«MM/dd/yyyy»
«MMMM dd, yyyy»
«yyMMdd»
«MM/dd/yyyy hh:mm:ss»
«MM-dd-yy»
«unsubscribe»
«UserDate1»
«UserDate2»
«UserDate3»
«ContributionTotalYTD»
«ContributionTotalDateRange»
«MonContributionsDateRange»
«ContributionCount»

These ones don't:

DateCreated
EmailCampaignId
ContributionId
ContributionDate

- EventId
- EventName
- Title
- Suffix
- NickName
- Household Salutation
- Household Envelope
- Street3
- StreetCityStateZipBlock
- AltEmailAddress
- Phone_Alt
- Phone_Cell
- Phone_Home
- Phone_Fax
- Phone_Bus
- Phone_BusFax
- ContributionLastDate
- ContributionLastAmount
- User001
- User002
- User003
- User004
- User005
- User006
- User007
- User008

User009

User010

User011

User012

BirthDate

MembershipDuration

MembershipType

MembershipStartDate

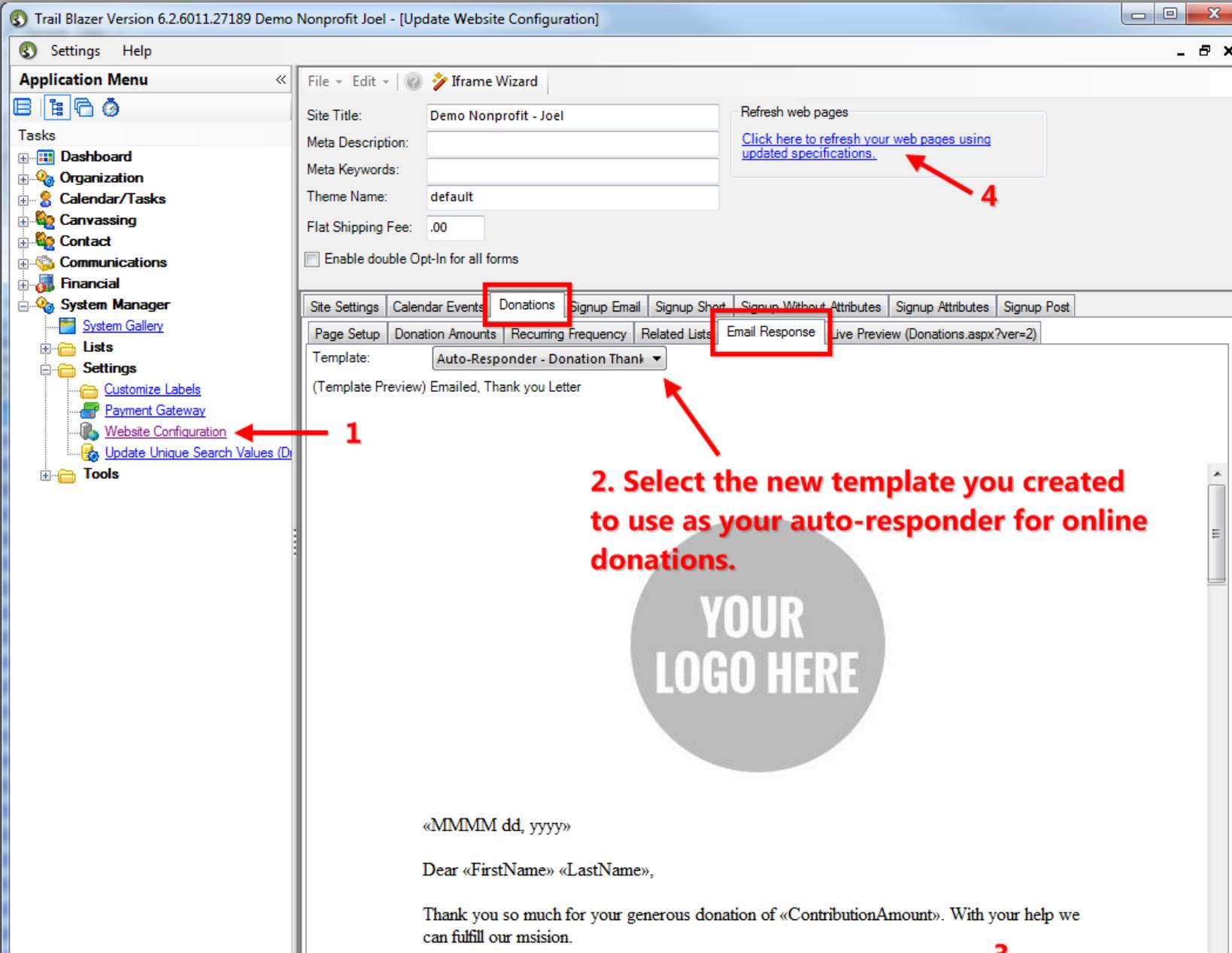
OrganizationName

OrderReceipt

Once you are finished with your template click **[Save and Close]**.

Now that your template is ready to go you'll need to **set it as your auto-responder** and **refresh your website settings**.

Navigate to **Website Configuration > Donations > Email Response**, **select your template** from the drop-down, click **[Save]**, and then click the **blue** link in the upper-right to refresh your settings. *The image below details these 4 steps.*



The screenshot shows the TrailBlazer software interface for configuring an auto-responder email. The window title is "Trail Blazer Version 6.2.6011.27189 Demo Nonprofit Joel - [Update Website Configuration]". The interface includes a menu bar (File, Edit, IFrame Wizard), a left-hand "Application Menu" with a tree view, and a main content area with various configuration tabs and a template preview.

1 An arrow points to the "Website Configuration" link in the "Settings" folder of the Application Menu.

2 A red box highlights the "Donations" tab in the top navigation bar, and another red box highlights the "Email Response" sub-tab. A red arrow points from the "Email Response" sub-tab to the "Template:" dropdown menu, which is set to "Auto-Responder - Donation Thank".

3 A red arrow points to the "Live Preview (Donations.aspx?ver=2)" sub-tab.

4 A red arrow points to a blue hyperlink that says "Click here to refresh your web pages using updated specifications." located in the "Refresh web pages" section.

The template preview shows the following text:

(Template Preview) Emailed, Thank you Letter

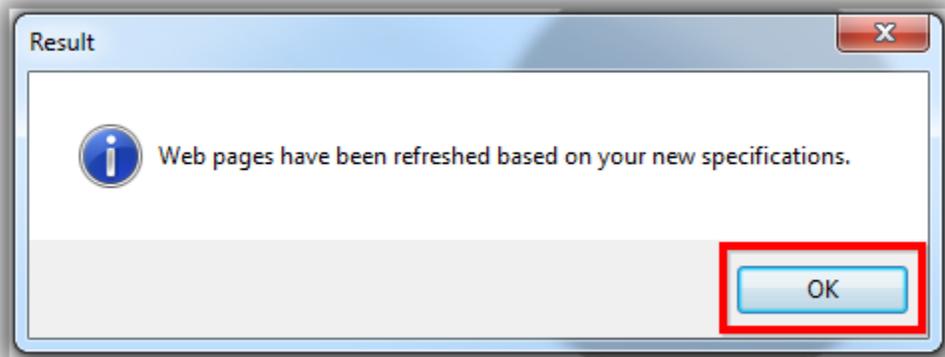
«MMMM dd, yyyy»

Dear «FirstName» «LastName»,

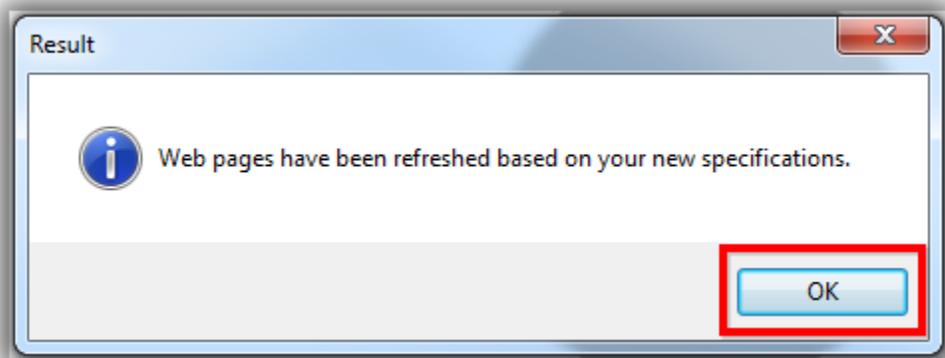
Thank you so much for your generous donation of «ContributionAmount». With your help we can fulfill our mission.

YOUR LOGO HERE

You'll receive a popup notification. Click **[OK]** to proceed with the refresh of your web settings.



You'll receive another popup message once this is finished. Click **[OK]** again to close the message.

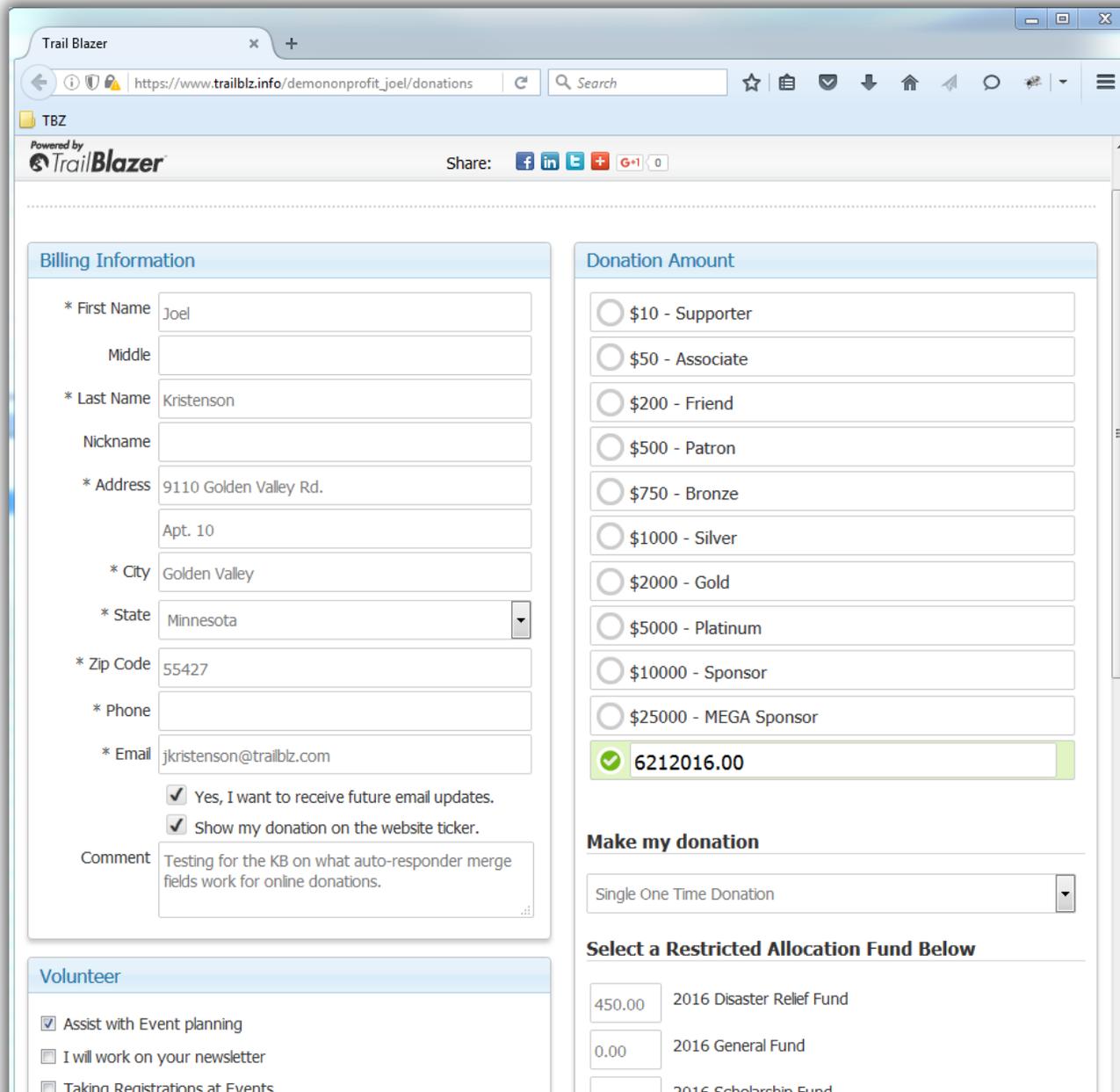


It's wise to now **test** out your email to make sure everything is how you want it to be i.e. the merge fields work, there aren't typos, the images/links work, etc.

You can navigate to your **Trail Blazer** donation form where it's implanted as an [iFrame](#) on your website, or to the location where it's hosted on our domain (www.trailblz.info/YourDatabaseNameGoesHere/donations.aspx). *In my example it was hosted @ https://www.trailblz.info/demononprofit_joel/donations.aspx as shown in the images below for my test contribution.*

Img 1 of 2 – Fill Out the Test Donation – Top Half of Form

Top half of example donation for testing the auto-responder email.

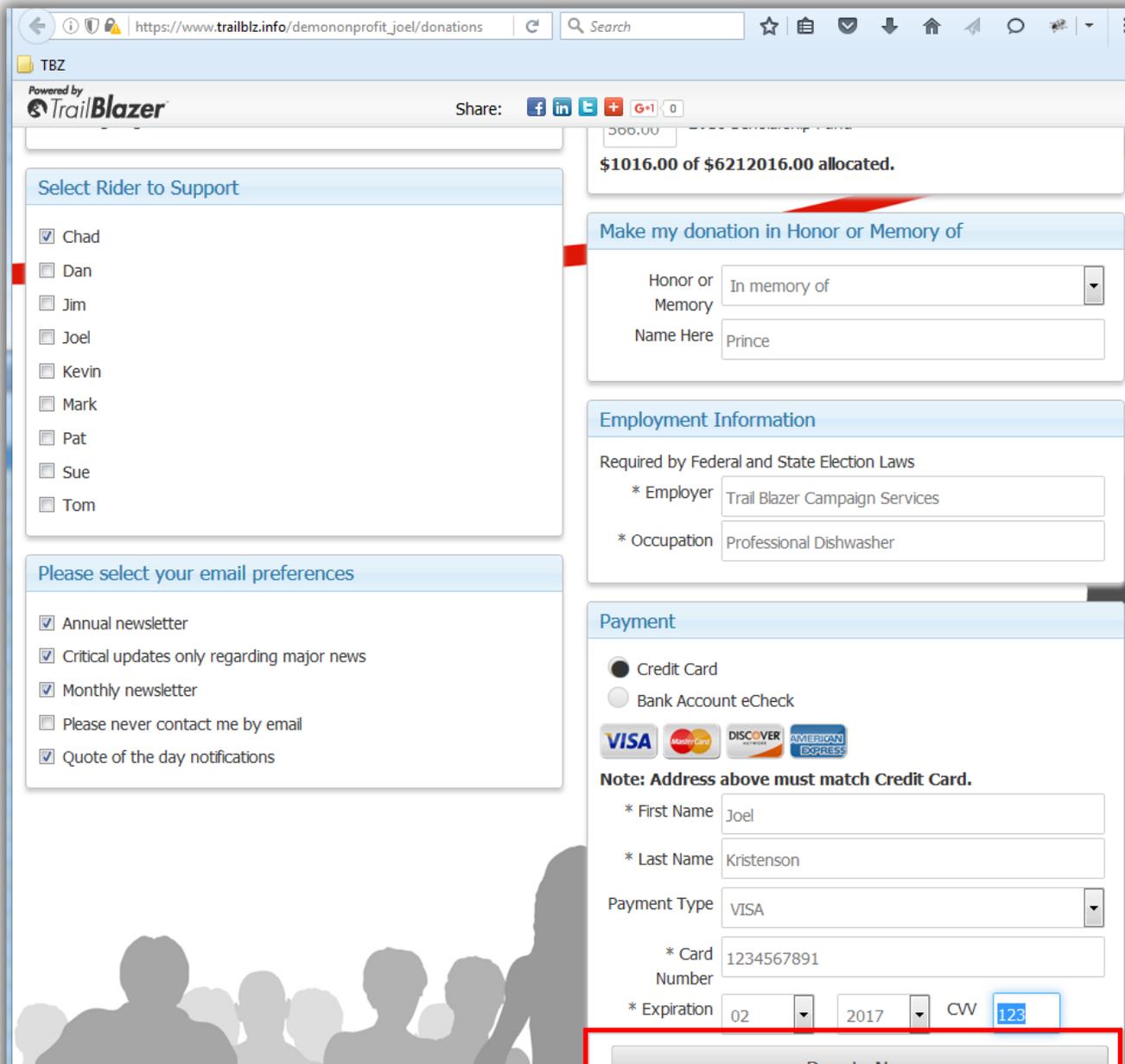


The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL https://www.trailblz.info/demononprofit_joel/donations. The page is titled "TBZ" and is powered by TrailBlazer. The form is divided into several sections:

- Billing Information:**
 - * First Name: Joel
 - Middle: (empty)
 - * Last Name: Kristenson
 - Nickname: (empty)
 - * Address: 9110 Golden Valley Rd., Apt. 10
 - * City: Golden Valley
 - * State: Minnesota
 - * Zip Code: 55427
 - * Phone: (empty)
 - * Email: jkristenson@trailblz.com
 - Yes, I want to receive future email updates.
 - Show my donation on the website ticker.
 - Comment: Testing for the KB on what auto-responder merge fields work for online donations.
- Donation Amount:**
 - \$10 - Supporter
 - \$50 - Associate
 - \$200 - Friend
 - \$500 - Patron
 - \$750 - Bronze
 - \$1000 - Silver
 - \$2000 - Gold
 - \$5000 - Platinum
 - \$10000 - Sponsor
 - \$25000 - MEGA Sponsor
 -
- Make my donation:**
 - Single One Time Donation
- Select a Restricted Allocation Fund Below:**
 - 450.00 2016 Disaster Relief Fund
 - 0.00 2016 General Fund
 - 2016 Scholarship Fund
- Volunteer:**
 - Assist with Event planning
 - I will work on your newsletter
 - Taking Registrations at Events

Img 2 of 2 – Fill Out the Test Donation – Bottom Half of Form

Bottom half of test donation for testing auto-responder emails.



https://www.trailblz.info/demononprofit_joel/donations

Powered by **TrailBlazer**

Select Rider to Support

- Chad
- Dan
- Jim
- Joel
- Kevin
- Mark
- Pat
- Sue
- Tom

Please select your email preferences

- Annual newsletter
- Critical updates only regarding major news
- Monthly newsletter
- Please never contact me by email
- Quote of the day notifications

\$1016.00 of \$6212016.00 allocated.

Make my donation in Honor or Memory of

Honor or Memory: In memory of

Name Here: Prince

Employment Information

Required by Federal and State Election Laws

* Employer: Trail Blazer Campaign Services

* Occupation: Professional Dishwasher

Payment

Credit Card

Bank Account eCheck

VISA MasterCard DISCOVER AMERICAN EXPRESS

Note: Address above must match Credit Card.

* First Name: Joel

* Last Name: Kristenson

Payment Type: VISA

* Card Number: 1234567891

* Expiration: 02 2017 CW 123

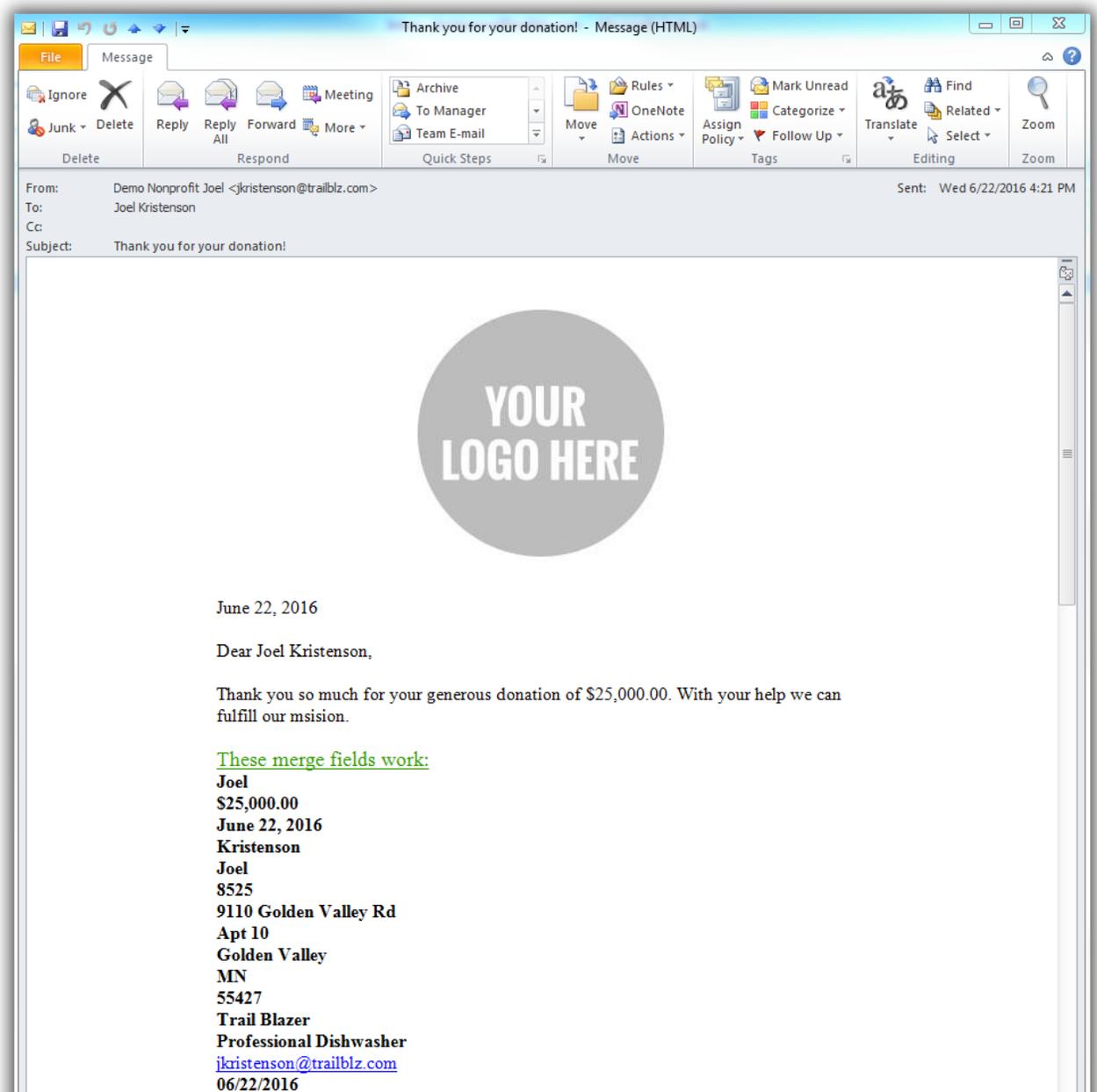
Donate Now

Once you're finished entering the form information click [Donate Now] to process the

Once you process your donation you'll receive the thank-you auto-responder email. *My example is shown below in 3 images with the working merge fields as well as those that don't work.*

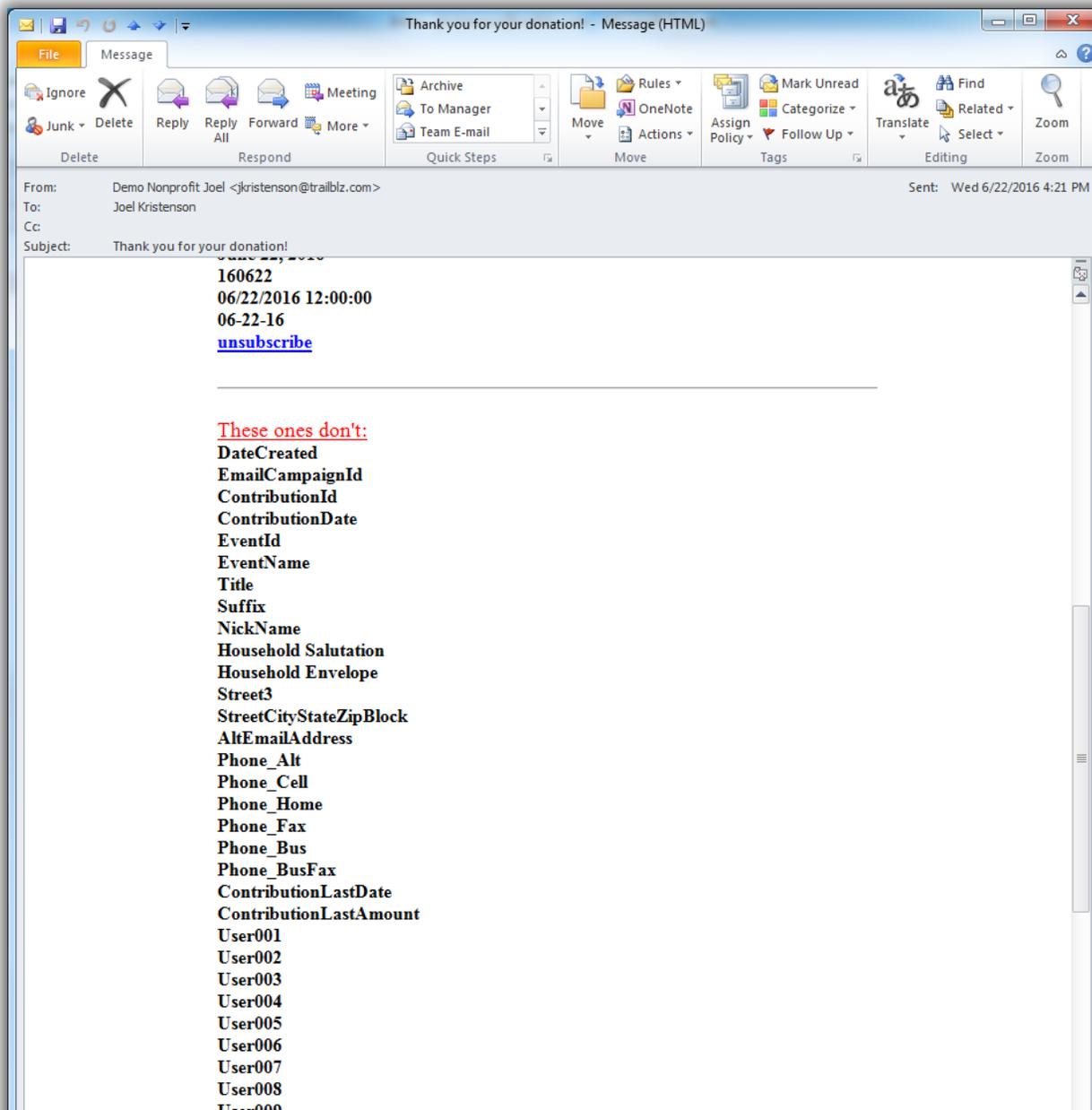
Img 1 of 3 – Top Half of My Example Auto-Responder

Top half of my example auto-responder email with merge fields.



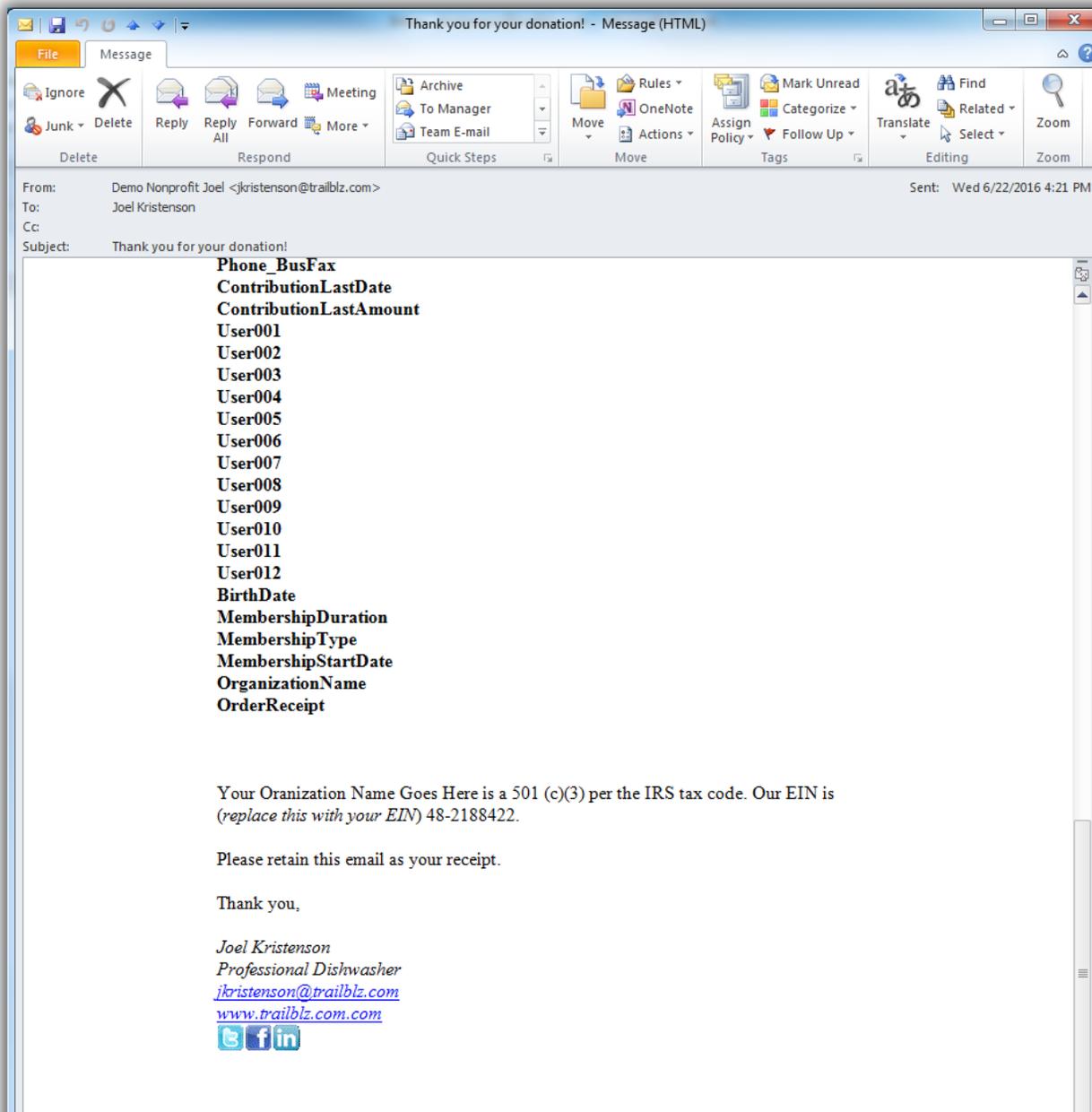
Img 2 of 3 – Top Half of My Example Auto-Responder

Middle section of my auto-responder email with merge fields.



Img 3 of 3 – Top Half of My Example Auto-Responder

Bottom half of my auto-responder email with merge fields.



If you are satisfied with the results you are finished, otherwise you can return to the template to make your changes. *If you need to make changes you'll need to refresh your website configuration settings after those changes are made.

The related resources below link to a variety of articles and videos related to this topic.



Trail Blazer

- YouTube Channel
- Knowledge Base Articles
- 3rd Party Resources

Related Resources

Article: [How to Configure Recurring Donation Options for your Trail Blazer Donation Form \(must be using either Vanco Services or Authorize.Net as your Merchant Gateway\)](#)

Article: [How to Put your Trail Blazer Donation Form on your Facebook Page](#)

Article: [Linking your Website to your Database with Configurable iFrame Forms](#)

Article: [Build Your Own Custom Signup Form \(Get\)](#)

Article: [How to Create Custom Email Responders for Specific Events – New 2016 Feature Upgrade](#)

Article: [How to Access and Use the Standard Trail Blazer Templates as a Starting Point for Template Creation and Mass E-Mail Campaigns](#)

Article: [Configuring your From and Reply Email Address Settings](#)

Article: [Sample Get JavaScript Form to Get you Started – Trail Blazer API](#)

Video: [Iframes](#)

Video: [Donation Auto Responders with Merge Fields](#)

Video: [Eblasts Configure email settings before mass emailing](#)

Video: [Thank you's using mass email](#)

Trail Blazer Live Support

☎ **Phone:** 1-866-909-8700

✉ **Email:** support@trailblz.com

f **Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Trail-Blazer-Software/64872951180>

t **Twitter:** <https://twitter.com/trailblazersoft>

** As a policy we require that you have taken our intro training class before calling or emailing our live support team.*

[Click here](#) to view our calendar for upcoming classes and events. Feel free to sign up other members on your team for the same training.

** After registering you'll receive a confirmation email with the instructions for how to log into the [GoToMeeting](#) session where we host our live interactive trainings.*

** This service is included in your contract.*