



**THE HONORABLE MELDENE IVORY**  
**MAYOR OF GUM SPRINGS, AR**  
**February 2019 to Present (2022)**

The members of the Peake High School Class of 1966 are known for their talent, leadership, service and philanthropy, and Mel Ivory exemplifies those traits so well. After high school, Ivory enlisted in the U. S. Army and served for 24 years which included a tour of duty in Viet Nam; he earned the rank of Army Sergeant First Class (E-7). Ivory's MOS was in Infantry as a nuclear biological and chemical specialist. His special recognitions in service to our country include:

- National Defense Service Medal Viet Nam Service Medal
- Viet Nam Campaign Medal Combat Infantry Badge
- Air Medal Army Commendation Medal
- Viet Nam Cross of Gallantry with Palm Armed Forces Reserve Medal
- NCO Professional Development Ribbon (3) Army Service Ribbon
- Army Reserve Component Achievement Medal (3d Award)

After his service to our country, he has continued his service to the community, his church, and others. In February 2019 the town of Gum Springs was experiencing a leadership crisis; much of the infrastructure needed fixing or updating. The City Council drafted Ivory to serve as its mayor. With the help of the City Council, Ivory was able to secure a loan along with a grant from the state of Arkansas to address some of the deficits. Under Ivory's leadership, the town installed a completely new water system, improved the streets, and implemented some beautification practices. The water system had not been updated since 1968 when it was first installed.

He is a member of the St. Ruth Baptist Church, Gum Springs, Rev. Jamal Brown, Pastor. At St. Ruth Baptist Church, Ivory is a Sunday School Teacher, moreover, he has been chairman of the deacon board for two years; he has been a deacon for over 20 years. He has served as president of the usher board, and he is president of the Gum Springs Cemetery. In addition to his offices held at his church, he has been the trusted treasurer for the Buff aloes' Foundation, Inc. since its inception in 1993.

Mel is a Henderson State University alum with more than six semesters of classes with a major in sociology. He is married to the lovely Miss Brenda Louise Penny, and they have a blended family of five children and many grandchildren and great-grandchildren.