



e-shuttle VOLUME V, number 1
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Welcome to the **21st Edition** of the AVL e-shuttle!

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1. Introduction to Production. SALE!

2002 marks AVL's 25th year in business. Over that time, we have seen a lot of trends, but surely one of the most interesting is that Production Handweavers seem to do better in times of economic downturn. Why? We can only speculate, but it might be that consumers are a little more careful with their purchases. Rather than willy-nilly spending on everything in sight, they seem to value unique items that are a little "different".

Whatever the cause, based on past history, 2002 could be a great year for AVL weavers. That's why we're kicking off the New Year with another in our long line of Introduction to Production Sales (the first of which was held in 1984!). And what a sale it is!

Buy any Production, Technical, or Folding Dobby Loom; or a Professional Dobby Rug Loom and we'll give you a One Yard (or half-yard) Sectional Warp Beam and a 56 spindle Cone Rack ... at NO CHARGE. On most looms, this could represent quite a bit of savings.

On selected Rug Looms, it's even more! So, start your plans for the upcoming year. Book your stand at

a few shows. Order your yarns. Consider a new AVL loom. But don't delay, the 2002 Introduction to Production Sale ends February 28, 2002.

2. The Legacy of Jim Ahrens ... a Short Editorial

It's hard to believe that Jim Ahrens has been gone for over a year now, because his ideas seem as fresh or fresher than ever. Those of you who follow some of the weaving groups on the Internet know that there has been a raging debate on handweaving vs. commercial weaving ... an artificial division that Jim spent a lifetime trying to bridge. Twenty-five years ago, AVL Looms was founded (as Ahrens & Violette Looms) with the expressed idea of serving the needs of "Production Handweavers", which surely seemed to be an oxymoron if ever there was one ... but, guess what? It wasn't. Rather, production handweaving became a reality for hundreds, if not thousands of weavers around the world.

The governing idea behind those early A&V looms was to combine the best parts of power looms with ergonomically correct handweaving technology and the result: the Production Dobby Loom was a huge success. Since then, of course, many of Jim's ideas have been copied. Dobbies and end-feed shuttles are now ubiquitous.

Yet remarkably, many of Jim's best ideas have yet to be duplicated. Jim's favorite device, the AVL Tension Box, is still unequaled. Our six-piece Sectional Beam is stronger and more efficient than any other on the market (*and now it's on sale ... see above ... Ed.*). And although virtually every power loom in the world uses a dynamic warp tension system, AVLs still are the only handlooms with this simple yet essential warp tension mechanism. (*How do you tell if warp tension is dynamic? One way is to see if the tension is set at the warp beam ... if it is, then it's probably dynamic ... Ed.*).

Speaking of dynamic, AVL's leadership has never been more so. Dynamic hardly does justice to the positive changes CEO, Matt Taylor, has wrought at AVL since he came aboard in early 2001. We're in a sparkling new facility; wood is cut by computer (and metal is soon to follow); and the looms are being re-worked at blinding speed. Plus, there will be a host of new products coming down the pipeline in the weeks and months ahead. It's an exciting time.

Through it all, though, we are constantly reminded of Jim Ahrens and his prescient sense of what was needed and wanted by you ... the handweavers of the world.

3. The AVL Weaving School EXPANDS! Spring 2002 Schedule

AVL invites you to join in a variety of weaving workshops that will show you how to keep your AVL running smoothly and increase your weaving productivity.

Our most popular class is [Maximizing the Use of Your AVL](#). This now well-tested workshop is

designed for new AVL weavers or for weavers who want to better learn the mechanical and electronic systems on their looms. Next open class is scheduled for March 20-23, 2002.

Make Money Using Your AVL! Our [Production Weaving](#) class covers how to approach volume needs and product development, plus business tips on sources, licensing, fee structures, and marketing. Next scheduled class is March 6-8, 2002.

Avoid color disasters ... take [Weaving a Color Wheel](#). This course gives students confidence using color in a woven structure. Learn to blend color and structure to create beautiful weaves. Next scheduled class is April 4-5, 2002.

Be swept off your feet with [Rug Weaving on AVL Professional Dobby Rug Looms](#). Want to enjoy handwoven rugs that feel and look great? Learn the basics of rug weaving to improve the texture and design of rugs. Next scheduled class is May 1-3, 2002.

All workshops are held in AVL's weaving loft here in Chico, CA. Sandy Fisher, AVL's instructor, has been weaving on AVL looms and making a living as a weaver since 1981. Sandy's experience and expertise is available to become the weaver you want to be. Visit Sandy's [website](#).

If you can't make it to Chico, then consider having AVL's Traveling Teacher come to you. Choose from any of the AVL course subjects and we'll tailor a workshop to your group's interest. Plus, our instructors teach the course in your home, studio, school, guild meeting, or retreat.

For more information and workshop dates, please click [here](#).

4. AVL Workshop Dobby Loom ... e-mail from a Customer

The following is some unsolicited e-mail from some happy visitors to Chico. Ed.

Date: Fri, 26 Oct 2001 10:16:14 -0700
From: "Nadine & John Purcell" <Purcell@cdsnet.net>
Subject: California Traveler

We went ... We saw ... They conquered!

On Tuesday of this week, we visited AVL in Chico. After viewing their website, and reading about the California Traveler Workshop loom, we were curious to see it, and to weave on it.

One question that was answered for us was about the IDUs. The "Independent Design Units" come in 8 - 16 or 24 shafts. You cannot take three 8 shaft units and put them together for 24. The Compu-Dobby III that runs the loom must be configured for the number of shafts. We compared the size to our

8-shaft Baby Mac. The CT is 7" taller, 7" deeper (front to back), and 1" narrower - and it can have up to 3 times as many shafts!

The weaving action was good, with an excellent shed. The Compu-Dobby goes on and off with no special adjustments required - just get the screws through the holes in the frame. Matt showed us a "power pack" (available from auto supply stores, or similar) that can be used to run the loom when not close to an electric plug-in. An interesting idea that his mother is planning to use for a demonstration in a shopping mall.

For a "study loom" (like working through Bonnie Inouye's book); or for workshops, it looks like a great loom! It is replacing our 16 shaft Studio of Handcrafts table loom, and we will probably sell the Baby Mac also. There is nothing like seeing it in "person"!

We have no financial interest in AVL - except they have our money! We just like what we saw, and have enjoyed their support over the years for our 1984 Production Dobby loom - which now is a Compu-Dobby II loom.

Will be glad to answer inquiries, either privately, or on list.

- Nadine & John Purcell, in Ashland, OR

Editor's note ... AVL [Workshop Dobby Looms](#) are now shipping!

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