

OBITUARY

Vladimir Alekseevich ISAKOV

May 3, 1950 — June 20, 2006



Vladimir Alekseevich Isakov, Vice-Director of the P. N. Lebedev Physical Institute and our friend and colleague, tragically passed away due to a car accident on 20 June 2006. The entire staff of the Lebedev Institute and Journal of Russian Laser Research (JRLR), along with the friends of Volodya Isakov in many institutions in Russia and abroad, are deeply saddened. Volodya Isakov was well loved due to his open and merry nature and his constant desire to help everybody – his coworkers, his director, his students, as well as colleagues – independently of whether it was during working hours, night time, or vacation time. Volodya Isakov worked hard both as scientist and editor. Moreover, with his extremely rare talent as an ideal administrator, he held on his shoulders the main part of the Lebedev Institute's day-to-day affairs during the last decade, helping the Institute avoid rapid decline after the breakup of the USSR and keeping alive the old and brilliant traditions of our institution, associated with what we call "Russian Intelligencia."

Professor Vladimir A. Isakov was born on 3 May 1950 in Moscow. He graduated from the Moscow Engineering Physics Institute in 1973. His PhD thesis "Kinetic processes in molecular gases excited by electron impact" was defended at the Lebedev Institute in 1976 under the supervision of Profs. A. N. Oraevsky and É. M. Belenov. In 1997 Vladimir Isakov defended his habilitation thesis "Hydrodynamic theory of ion-laser beam interaction with condensed matter." The scientific interests of Prof. Isakov were concentrated on problems of laser field interaction with matter. In his first publications in the mid-1970s, Isakov proposed and developed (with N. G. Basov, É. M. Belenov, A. N. Oraevsky, and others) a new approach to the problem of isotope separation based on the significant difference in the degree of vibronic excitations of isotopic modifications of molecules in thermodynamically nonequilibrium conditions. In the 1980s he constructed a hydrodynamic theory on the acceleration of multilayered targets for inertial thermonuclear fusion by beams of heavy ions. In the 1990s he engaged in a large number of analytical and numerical studies on the problem of laser ablation of metals and polymers by subpicosecond pulses. Quite recently he published several papers devoted to nonlinear effects in the absorption and reflection of femtosecond laser pulses by metals, where he discovered, in particular, some anomalies in the electron heat transport in such systems. In total, he published 80 scientific papers. His scientific work was accompanied by teaching and supervising students of the Moscow Physical Technical Institute, where he was a professor at the chair of quantum radiophysics. For many years he was the Editor of Journal of Soviet Laser Research (later Journal of Russian Laser Research). All volumes of JRLR were produced with his dominant organizational, editorial, and administrative contribution. His life in physics was a happy one. He was well recognized by the community, but his premature death prevented him from receiving a formal recognition from his peers.

With the death of Vladimir Isakov the physics community has lost a real scientist and one of the best organizers in the Russian Academy of Sciences.

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