

VALERY ZAGREBAEV 1950-2015

Valery Ivanovich Zagrebaev, deputy director of the Flerov Laboratory of Nuclear Reactions (FLNR) at the Joint Institute for Nuclear Research (JINR, Russia), passed away suddenly on 17 January, aged 64. He was a member of Academia Europaea, with strong relations to members of the Bergen Hub, in particular through his affiliation with the Russian-Nordic-British Theory (RNBT) collaboration.

Valery Zadrebaev graduated with a degree in physics from Leningrad State University, where he subsequently defended his PhD and habilitation thesis. The first 25 years of his academic career, he served in various positions in the Department of Theoretical Physics at Chuvash State University, leading to promotion to professor. In 1997, he was appointed as senior researcher at JINR FLNR. Two years later, he founded and became head of the laboratory group of theoretical and computational physics, and in 2007 he he became deputy director of JINR FLNR, a position he held up to his death.

Valery Zagrebaev added essential physics insight both to the physics of superheavy elements and to exotic structures like haloes on the nucleon driplines. In Bergen we are in particular proud to have co-authored (Oganessian, Zagrebaev, Vaagen) *Phys. Rev. Lett.* 82 (1999) “‘Di-neutron’ Configuration of ${}^6\text{He}$ ”, which made headlines internationally that year. Zagrebaev mastered, improved and added to nuclear reaction theory for low and intermediate energies, enabling his extensive interplay with experimentalists worldwide. He set an example that young people should follow; that of combining competence in both structure and reactions. Zagrebaev is a co-discoverer of the superheavy elements with atomic numbers 113, 114, 115, 116 and 118, synthesized during the past few years at JINR FLNR.

During his career, Zagrebaev published more than 190 articles in top scientific journals, both in Russia and abroad. His science work was in Russia awarded with JINR prizes, and his initiatives for keeping a top academic environment with student training in the laboratory, were greatly appreciated. Valery Zagrebaev was enthusiastic, a hard worker, and had strong opinions. He will be missed by many friends, both those who shared and who did not share his opinions.

On behalf of the Bergen Hub of Academia Europaea
L.P. Csernai and J.S. Vaagen