Aside from science, he was a talented sculptor and jeweller as well as an inveterate sportsman – mountain climber, skier, skater and diver. He was the first Chairman of the Presidium of the Soviet Federation of Underwater Sports, holder of Underwater Sportsman’s Card No. 1. He produced three well-known underwater films and was an appreciated TV popularizer of science.

In addition to his stature as a scientist, his sociability, wit and charm won him many friends throughout the world.