

Moving to the beat for charity

WILDWOOD — The phenomenon of electronic dance music — or EDM, as it is popularly called — will hit the beach here Saturday with an event called BeachGlow, a concert for charity benefiting the American Red Cross.

The brainchild of Dane Kunkel, who is the founder and CEO of nonprofit BeachGlow: Concerts for Charity Inc., the event will aid the Red Cross in its continuing efforts to help victims of Hurricane Sandy and other disasters.

Kunkel, 19, of Yardley, Bucks County, said he expects a crowd of more than 5,000 EDM enthusiasts for the festival-style concert that will be held on the Wildwood beach at East Garfield Avenue and the Boardwalk. Gates will open for the 12-act show at 2 p.m., and the music will start at 3 p.m. and continue to 11 p.m. Tickets are \$25 for early-bird purchases, and \$35 and \$45 at the gate. There are a limited number of VIP tickets available for \$60.

Performers include renowned EDM artists Dvbbs, Kasum, and Almond. Kunkel himself, who goes by the moniker Get Kunked, will perform along with Kap Slap, Gazzo, DJ Prime, Jai Wolf, Massolit, Grant & Duval, and Hard Part Bros.

EDM is a percussion-based electronic music genre produced primarily for nightclubs and large concerts. The music is created mostly for use by disc jockeys, who use synchronized mixes to alter and develop new beats and recordings. Some EDM artists use only pre-

recorded music, while others incorporate live vocals and music into their performances, Kunkel said.

Likened by some music critics to the Baby Boomer generation rock concerts of the 1960s and 1970s for their exuberance and mass participation, outdoor events such as BeachGlow primarily attract a younger demographic, ages 16 to 34.

Even if the boomers aren't sold on EDM, the numbers don't lie: EDM events such as BeachGlow have proved enormously popular nationwide.

Over Memorial Day weekend, an EDM event called Mysteryland in Woodstock, N.Y. — near the location of the original 1970 Woodstock Festival that attracted 400,000 people — brought in 10,000 attendees. That same weekend, 100,000 fans flocked to the MetLife Stadium in East Rutherford, N.J., for the two-day Electric Daisy Carnival.

Though the Daisy Carnival featured elaborate stage designs and ground decor, carnival rides, and fireworks, it was dwarfed by the popularity of the EDM behemoth, Electric Daisy Las Vegas, which was held two weeks ago. The event brought 400,000 fans for three days of music and dancing in the desert.

"I think the popularity of EDM is growing because it brings so many styles of music together in a way that makes people just want to dance and be together," said Kunkel, who became interested in the genre while

he was a high school student at the Pennington School, in Pennington, N.J.

After a soccer injury sidelined him from the playing field, Kunkel started playing music for friends' parties from a set of sound equipment he purchased with money he'd saved.

When he was asked to host a student-faculty dance party at the school, he saw the music breaking down barriers between the kids and the adults — and he decided to start raising money for charity through music events. The school puts a strong emphasis on community service, he said.

Two years ago, while he was a senior, Kunkel hosted BeachGlow 2012, an eight-artist bill at the Sun National Bank Center in Trenton to benefit breast cancer research and help victims of the Haiti earthquake disaster. His organization has attracted sponsorship from corporations such as Coca Cola, Pivot, Coors Light, Xfinity, and Utz.

Kunkel said he has spent about a year and a half organizing BeachGlow in Wildwood, with the help of a four-member board of directors and a 10-member management and consulting team largely made up of family and friends, who donate their time.

For more information about the company and the Wildwood festival, visit www.beachglow.org

— Jacqueline L. Urgo

Dane Kunkel is triggering for the throngs.

