

## *Doc by Marty Felix*

On May 16, 2006, Billie Hutchings and I were cruising along the upper part of the road in North Soda when we spotted Buttermilk's band of five standing near the edge of the trees several yards away. We stopped to have a look at them and wondered why they didn't take off running like they usually did, for this was a rather spooky band. We knew something was amiss, so we got out our binoculars and had a look. Miss Kitty, a sorrel mare, had afterbirth coming out her hind end. OMG! She had just given birth! But where was the foal? In the shade, under a juniper tree, we located tiny horse ears, and they were twitching, so we know the baby was alive but hadn't gotten up yet. The bay foal was trying to get up, but he had been born in a tangle of branches and was struggling to get to his feet. Miss Kitty sure didn't pick a very good place to have a baby! After what seemed like an eternity, the newborn stood up on wobbly legs. We watched him take his first steps while Miss Kitty sniffed him from one end to the other. The other mares stared at the little baby as if they were fascinated by the miracle of birth. Billie and I were doing the same thing. It was hard to leave, but we felt we had intruded long enough, so we slowly drove on down the road. It was one of those days when we said, "Oh wow!" numerous times.

We named this little one Doc, and of course, he has always had a special place in our hearts. We enjoyed watching him grow up and become a proud and powerful band stallion. Even though some of the mares in his harem were skittish, Doc was always "Mr. Laid-back" around people. It was difficult to see this stallion that we had literally known since birth, be taken off the range in Sept. When Doc arrives in Grand Junction in November, he will be a gelding. We are hoping that someone will adopt this handsome, well-built horse, even if he is 12 years old. We will miss him, and North Soda will never be the same without easy-going Doc.



Doc's Band