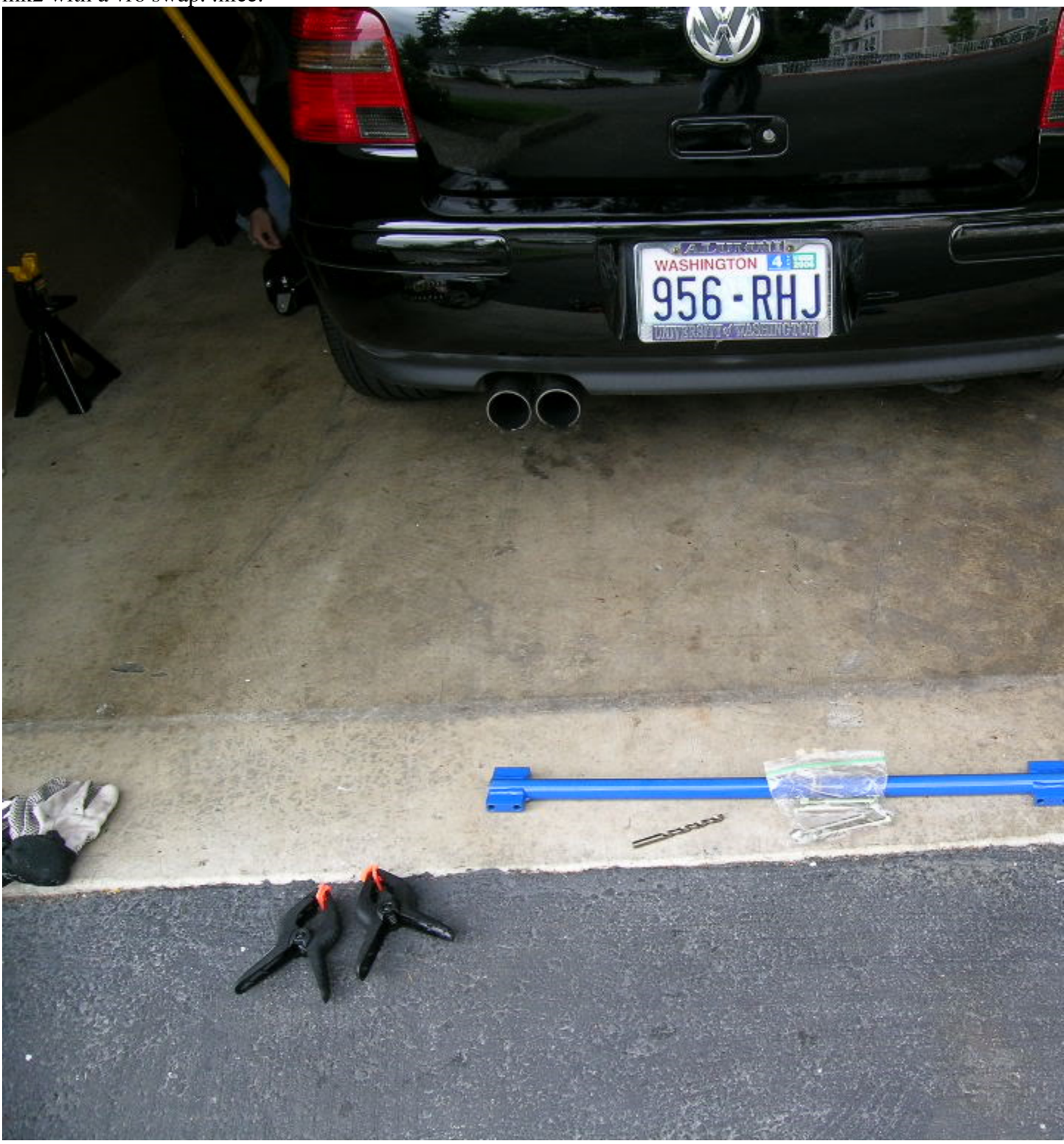
After a week of driving with just neuspeed softsports and bilstein hd setup, I decided it was time to install the bar. I picked up a 3/8" cobalt drill bit (Needed for its ability to stay sharp with extreme temps) and a couple of cheap clamps because I only had one c-clamp to work with. You can skimp on the clamps, don't skimp on the drill bit.

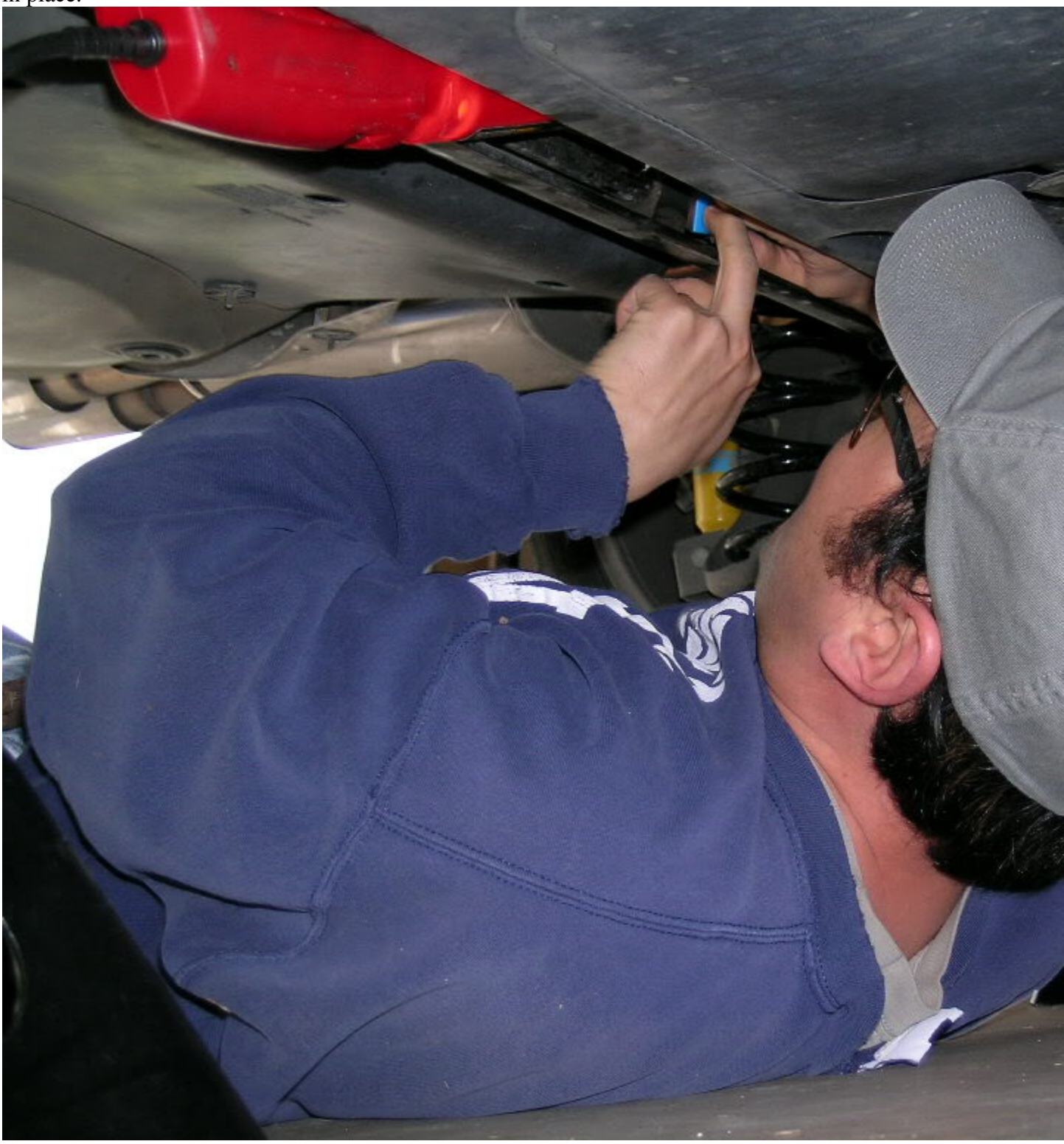
Again, eggroller (Ray) volunteered his garage and tools to help with the install. The whole install took 4 hrs from the time I rolled into the garage to finishing the test drive. (I subtracted the break for lunch and the 'test drive.') note: the wheels to the right of my car are connected to one cherry

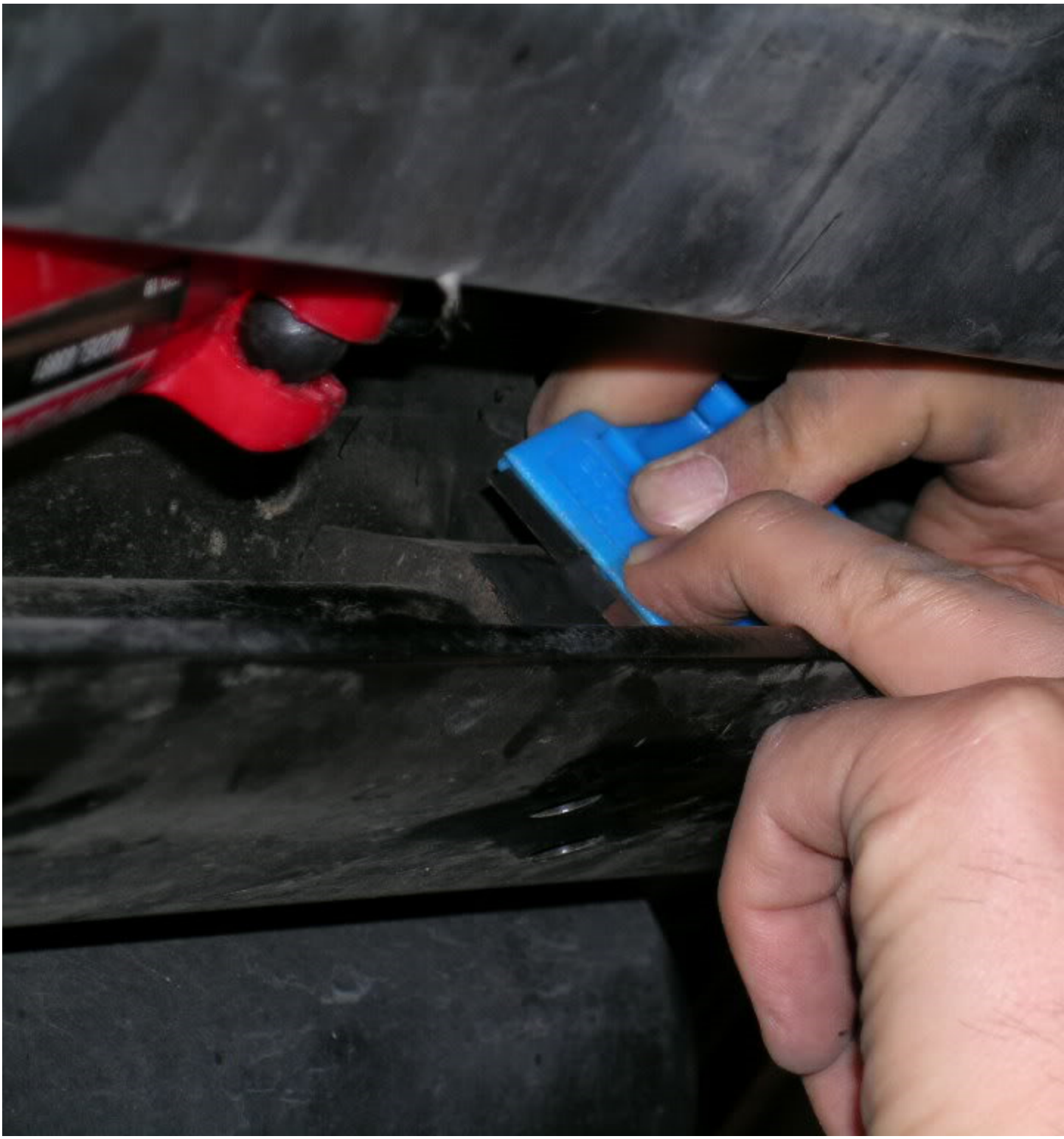
mk2 with a vr6 swap. :nice:



We first started by cutting some of the rubber material that buffers the stock sway bar inside the torsion beam. It was pretty tough with just a blade since there' not a lot of room to get your hands

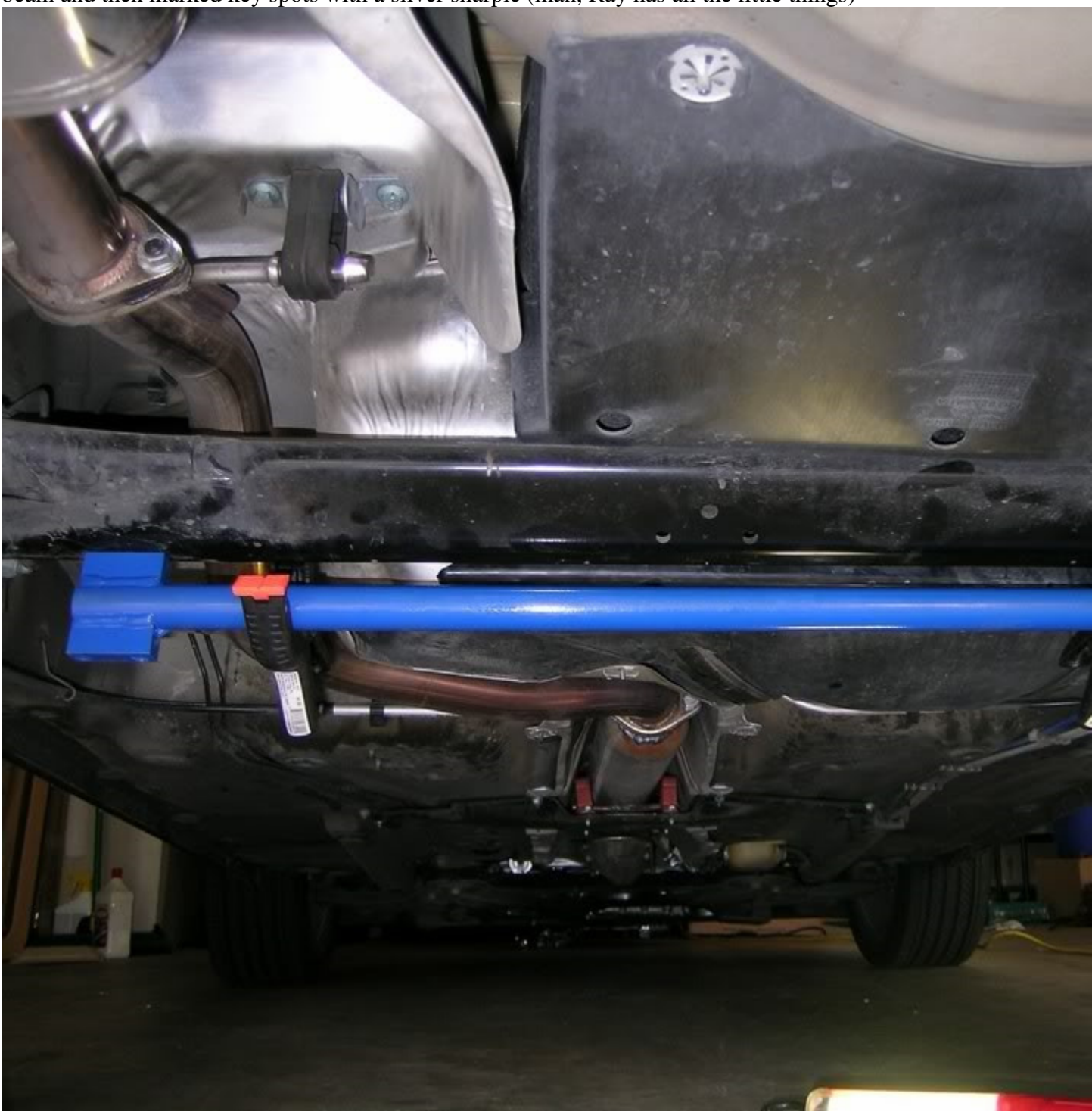
in place.





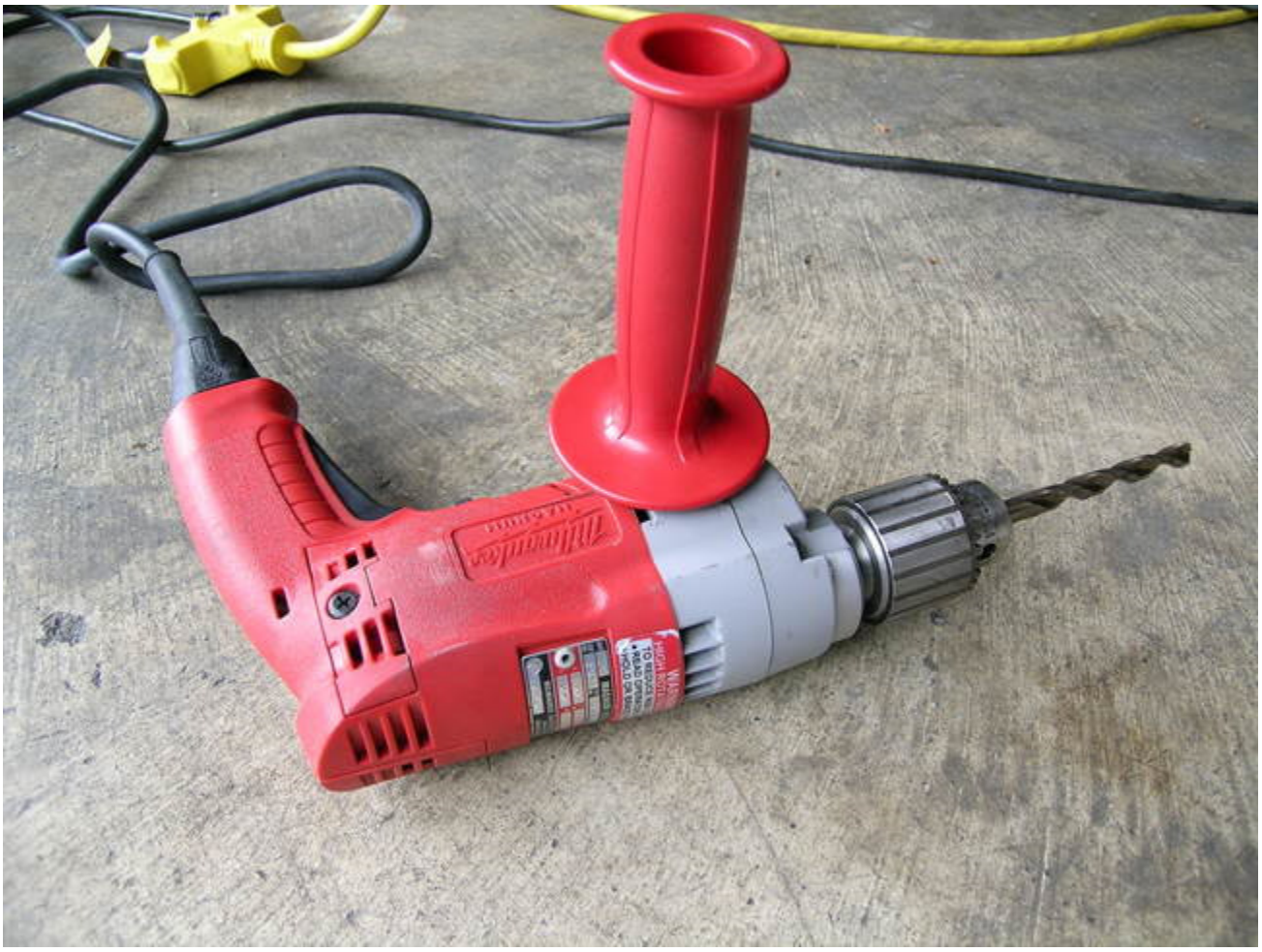
Once enough of the material was cut so the bar would sit nice and flush to the edge of the c-channel, we secured it in place under the beam to drill our first hole. We centered the bar on the

beam and then marked key spots with a silver sharpie (man, Ray has all the little things)



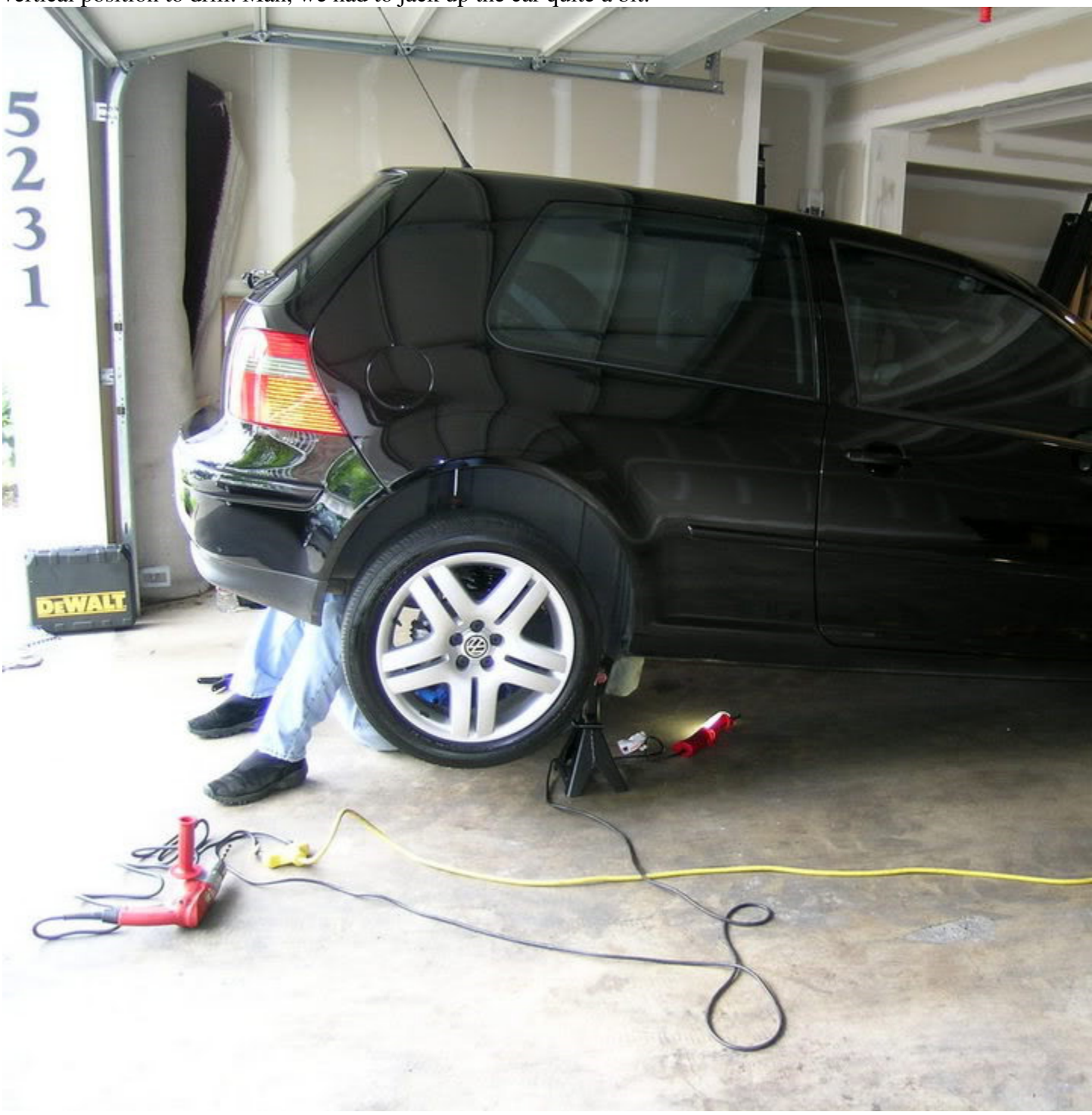
The drill. It was nice to use a drill with a lot of torque. We would need every bit of it. Although it was challenging to get the drill and bit to fit under the bar clamped to the bottom of the torsion

beam.



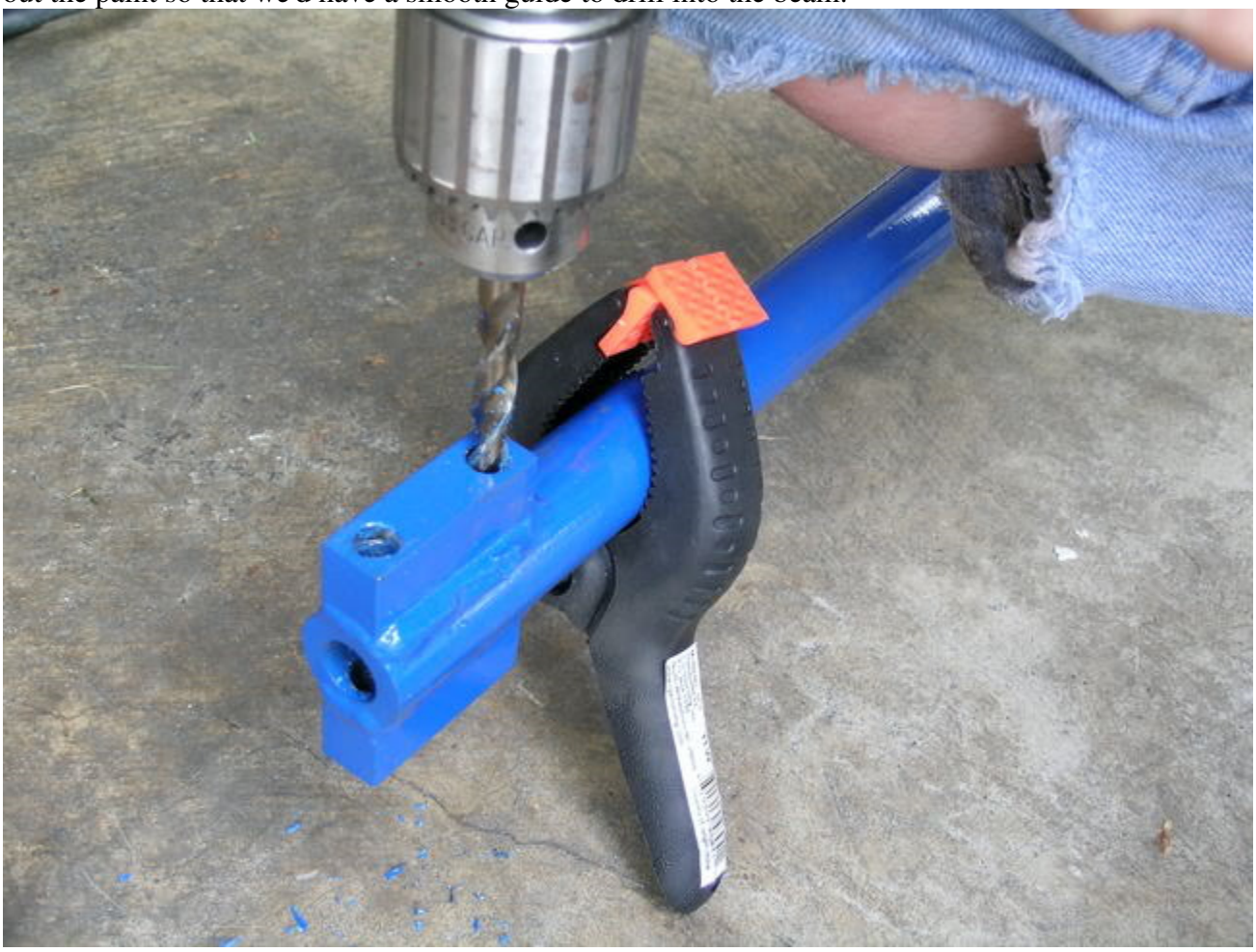
We noticed that if the suspension was loaded (like on a ramp) the c-beam would rotate a bit downward for a better view. But we only had jack and jackstands. Also, we felt being unloaded would ensure an even beam with no twist in it. Not to mention that unloaded provided the best

vertical position to drill. Man, we had to jack up the car quite a bit.



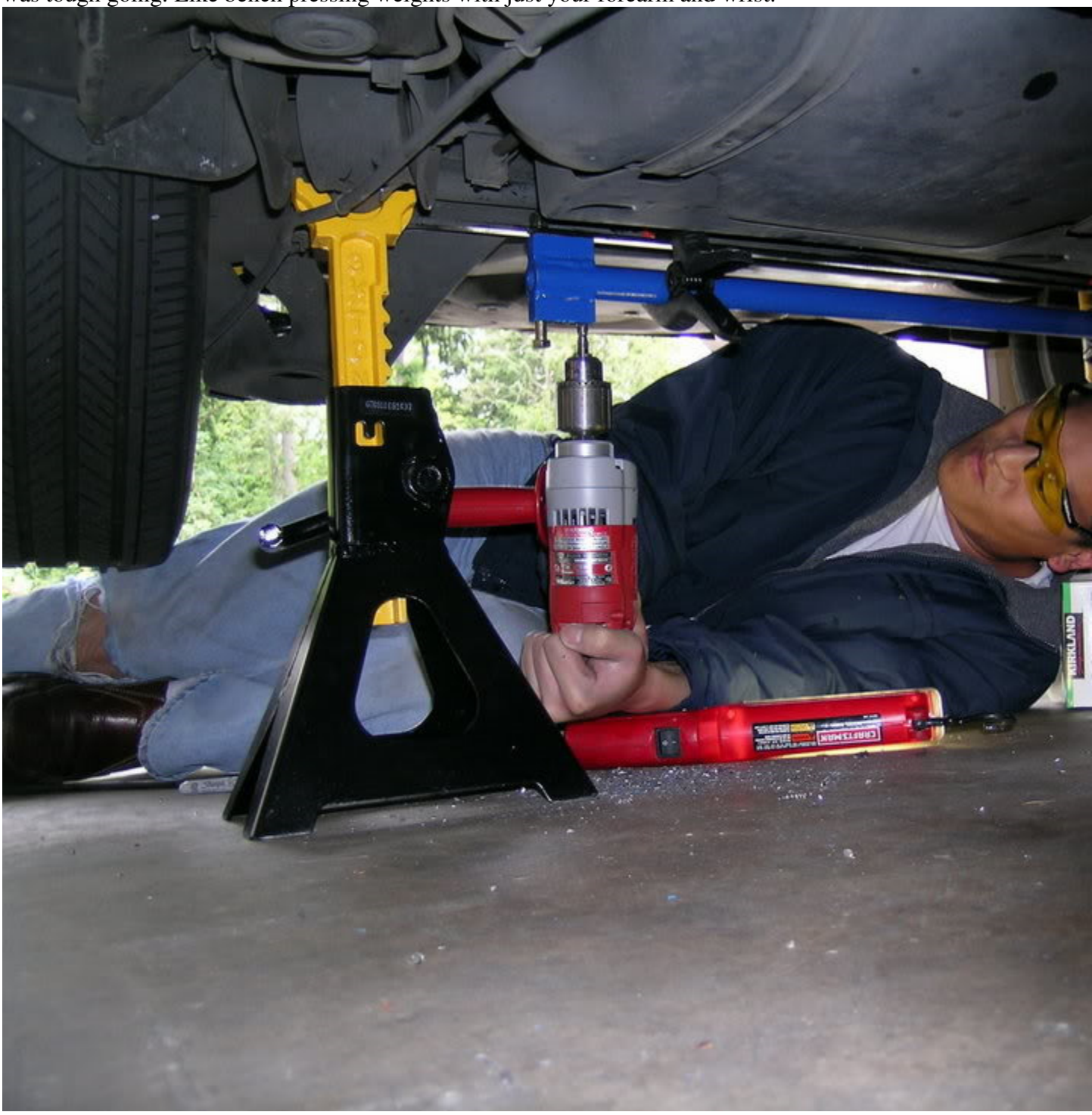
Just before we started drilling, we noticed the hole was too small for the bit. We checked with the bolt and it wouldn't fit. The paint made the hole too small. So we removed the bar and drilled

out the paint so that we'd have a smooth guide to drill into the beam.



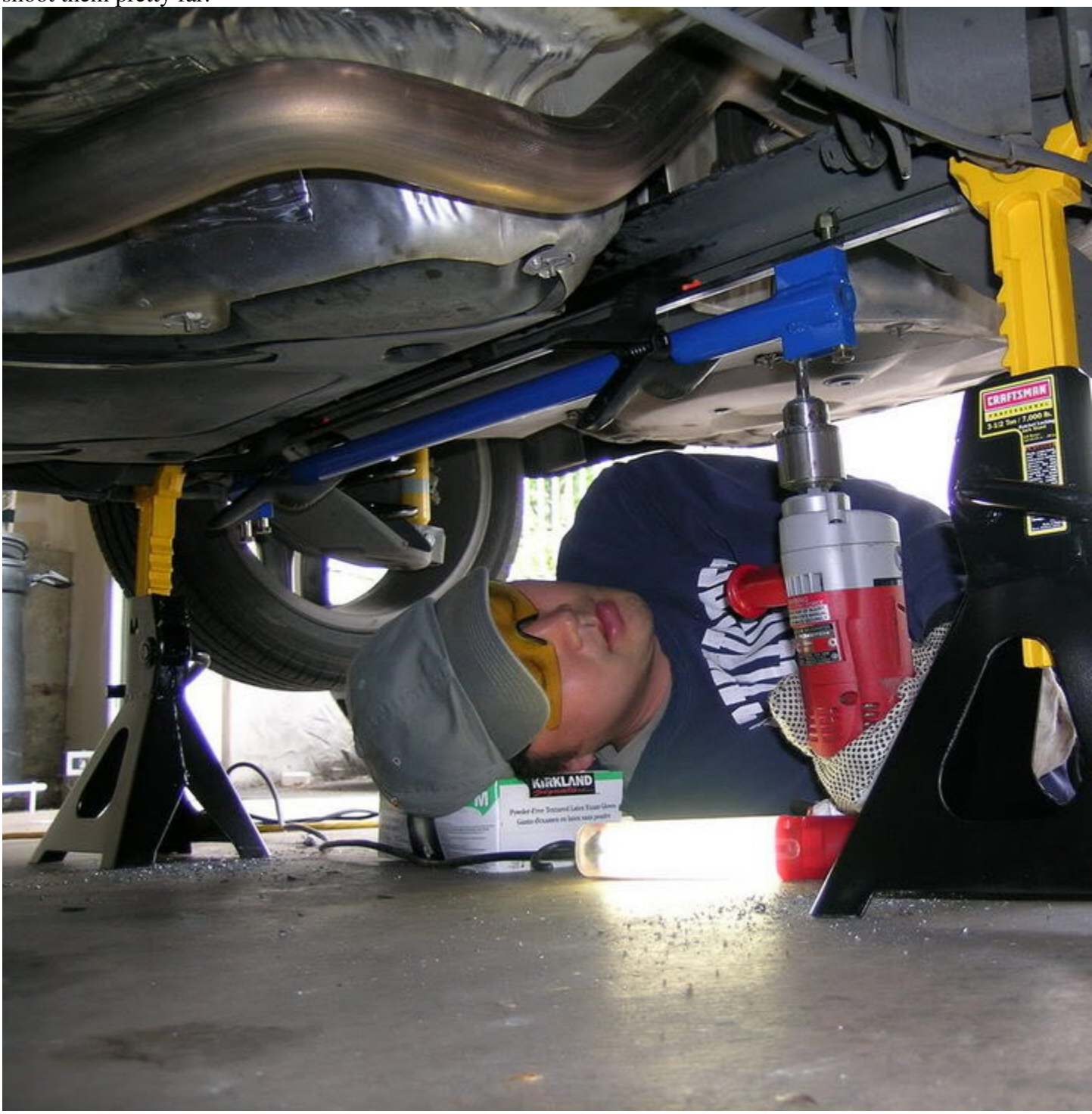
The clamps we were using weren't strong enough to totally hold things in place. So we had to supplement with one of us securing the bar by hand as well while the other drilled. The key to the drilling was to apply as much pressure as possible. But without a lot of room to work in, it

was tough going. Like bench pressing weights with just your forearm and wrist.

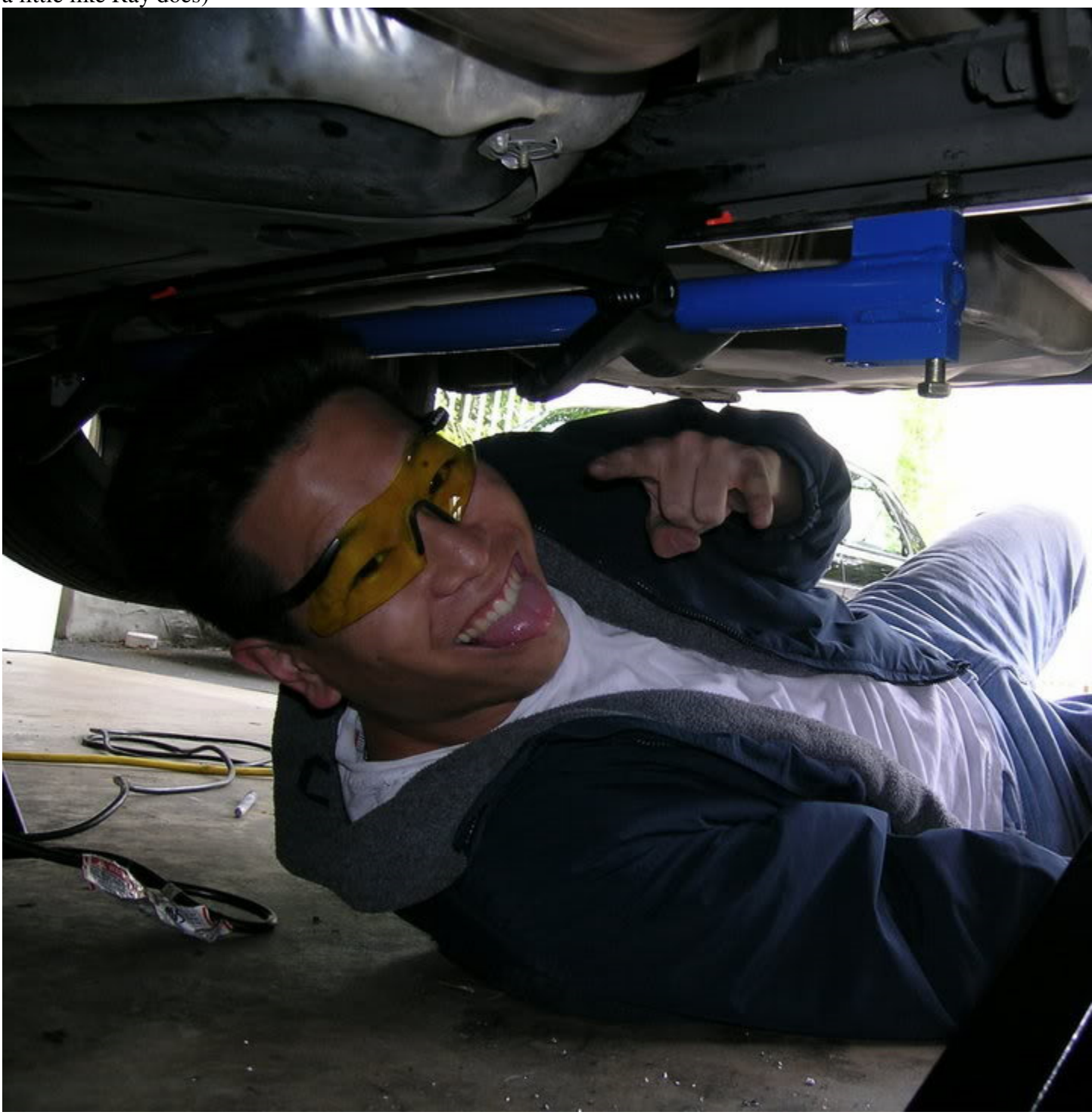


I should probably mention that you really need to have good eye protection and some gloves. The shavings from the beam can be like mini razor blades. And the vent from the drill could

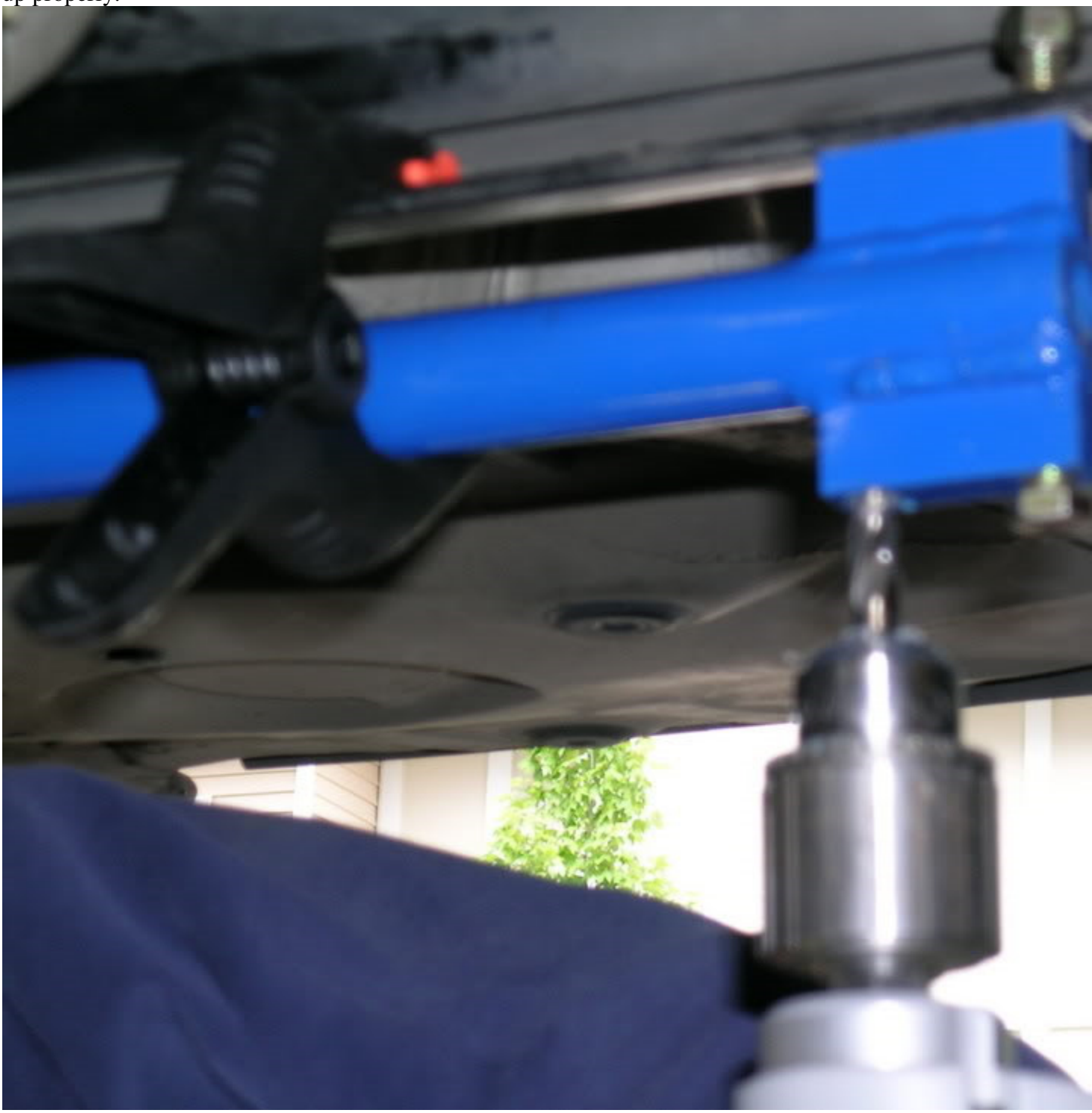
shoot them pretty far.



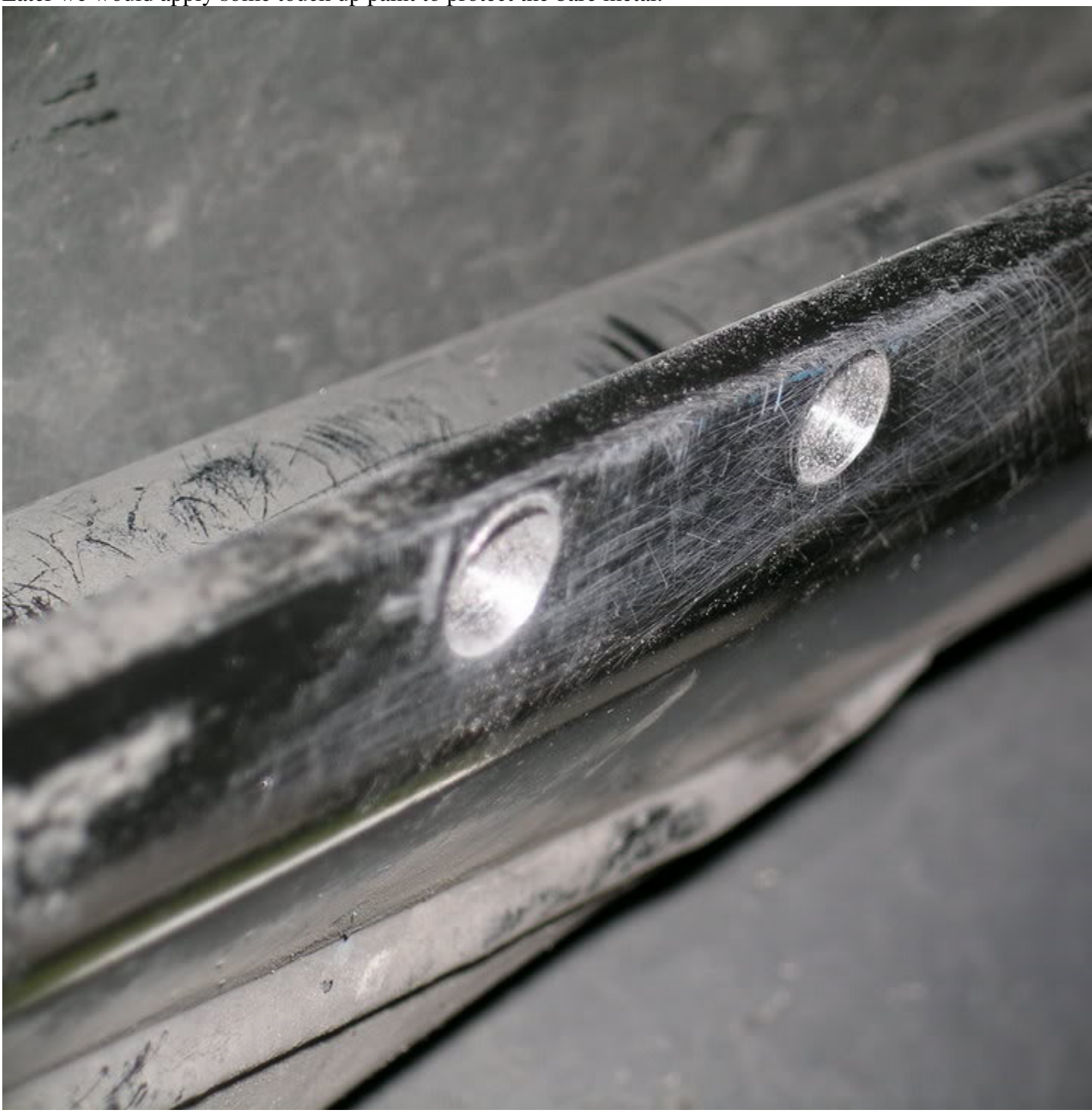
After drilling, resting, drilling, resting, repeat, repeat... and you finally punch through...(you feel a little like Ray does)



After the first hole was made, we fitted a bolt through to ensure that subsequent holes would line up properly.

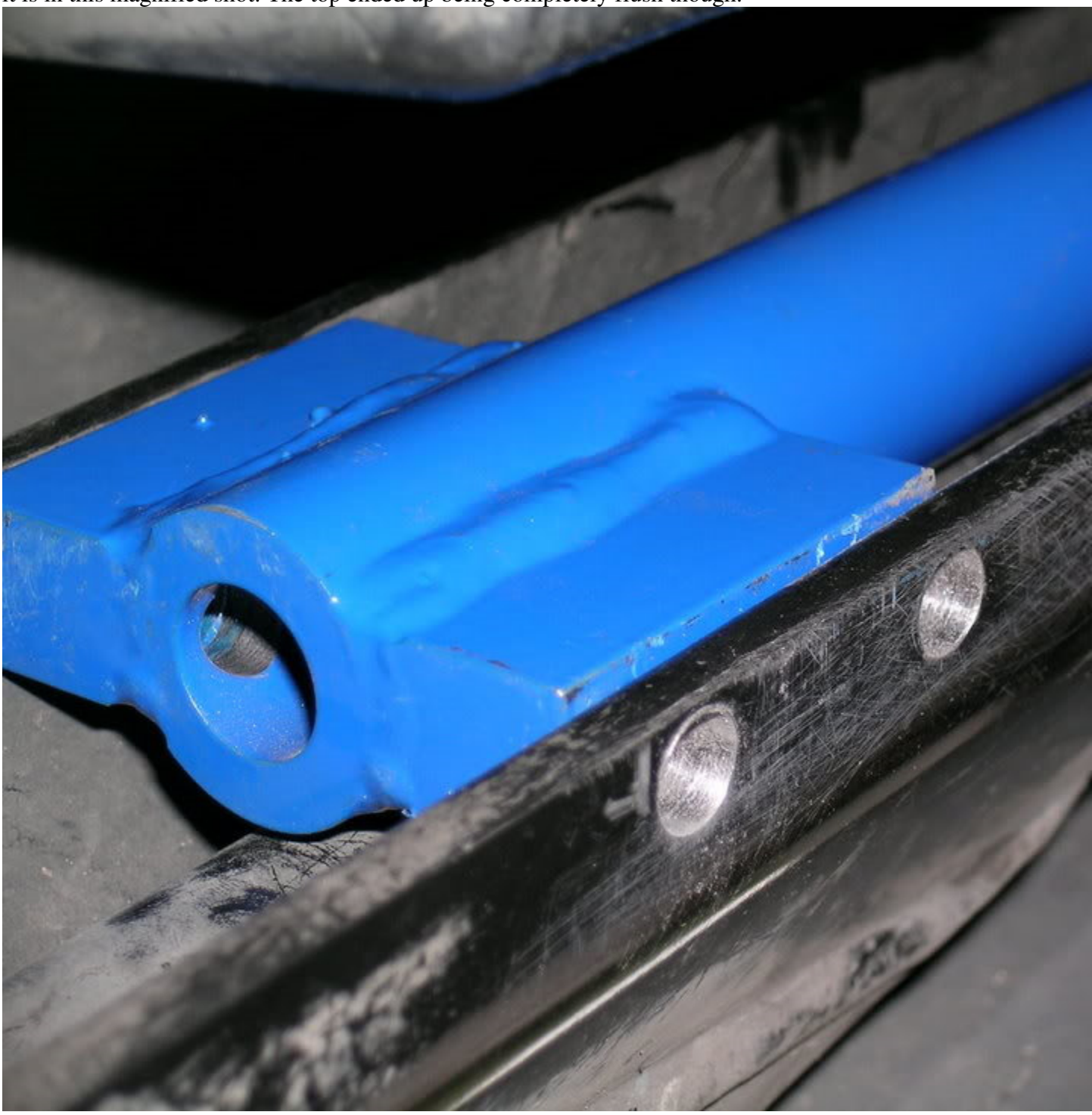


After all four holes were drilled. We sanded the area down to remove burrs and smooth the area. Later we would apply some touch up paint to protect the bare metal.



Then we fitted the bar in the c-beam and secured it in place with the clamps. (note the bar isn't quite flush. This was due to the initial alignment of the drill on the first hole. It looks worse than

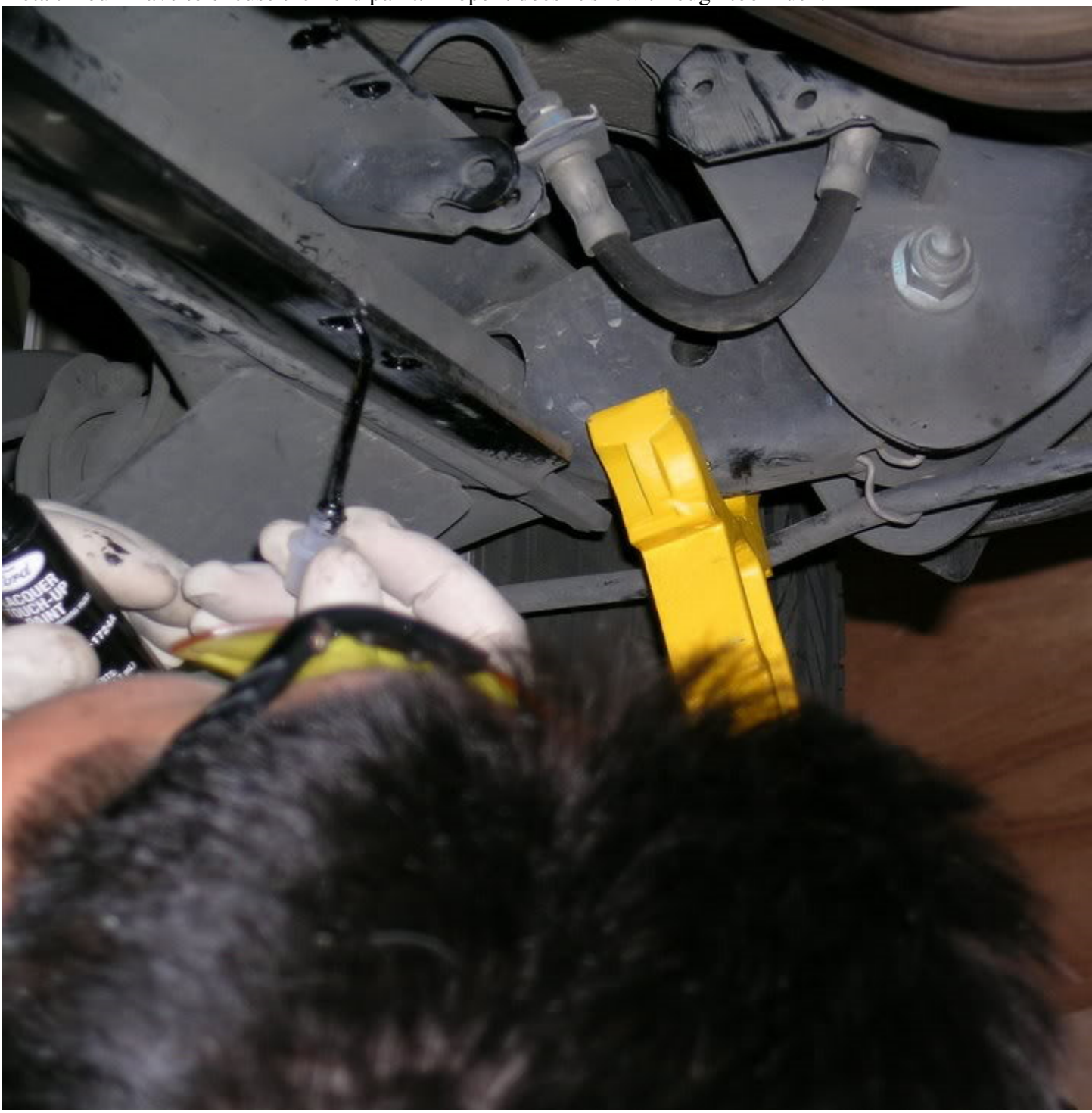
it is in this magnified shot. The top ended up being completely flush though.

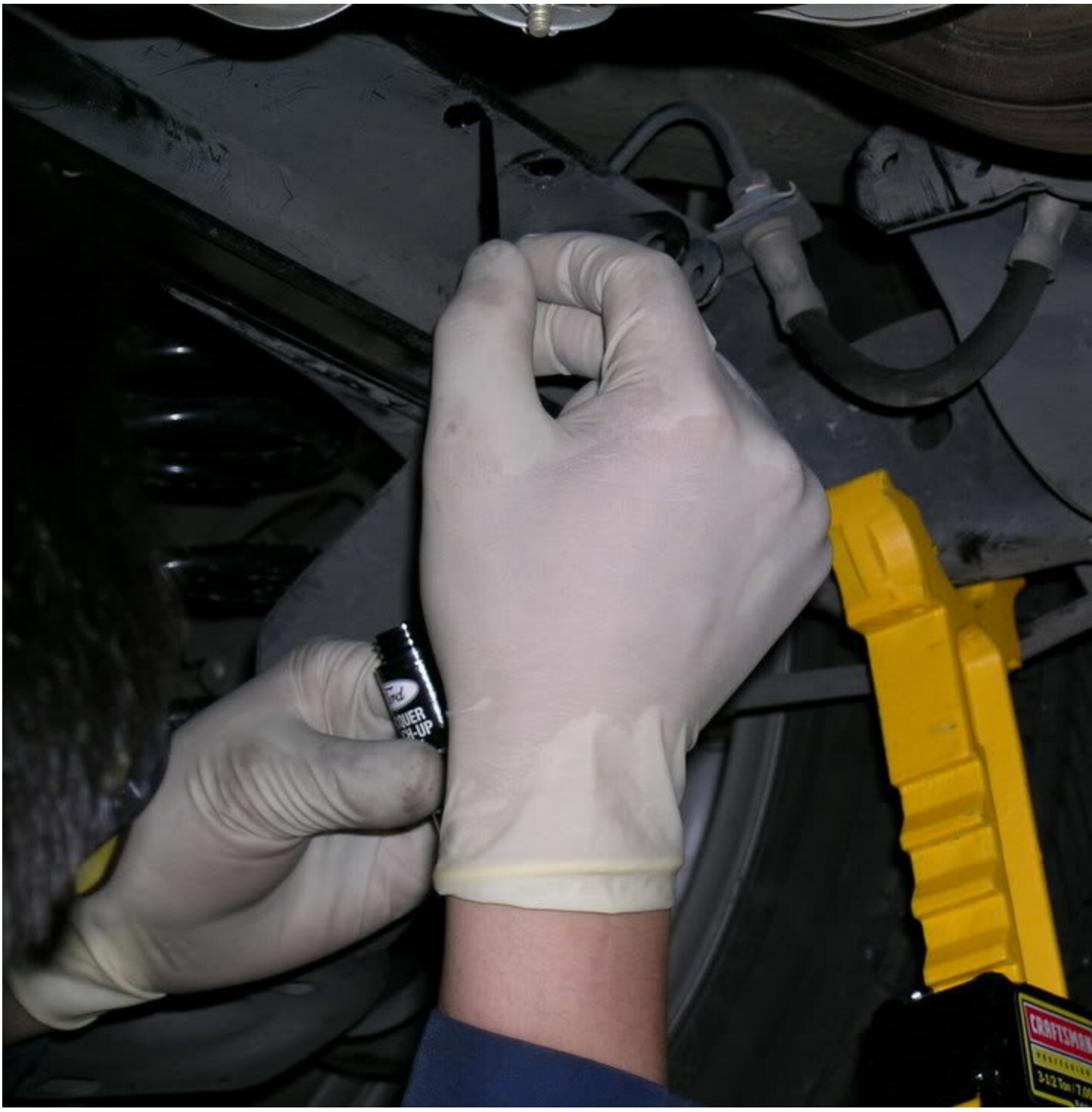


I don't have any pix of the top holes being drilled. But we used the bar in place as a guide/template for the top holes. We decided to combine our efforts by having Ray hold the drill and apply as much pressure as possible. Then I got directly under the drill and pushed upward. It's like 100% exertion by both of us, but we cut our drill time per hole from about 5-7 minutes on the first hole to about 40 seconds on the last two holes. Talk about heat, smoke was coming

out from drilled area and later we found shavings that were discolored from heat. We made sure to cool the bit and drill between drillings so we didn't damage anything or dull the bit. Our hands were shaking from all the exertion.

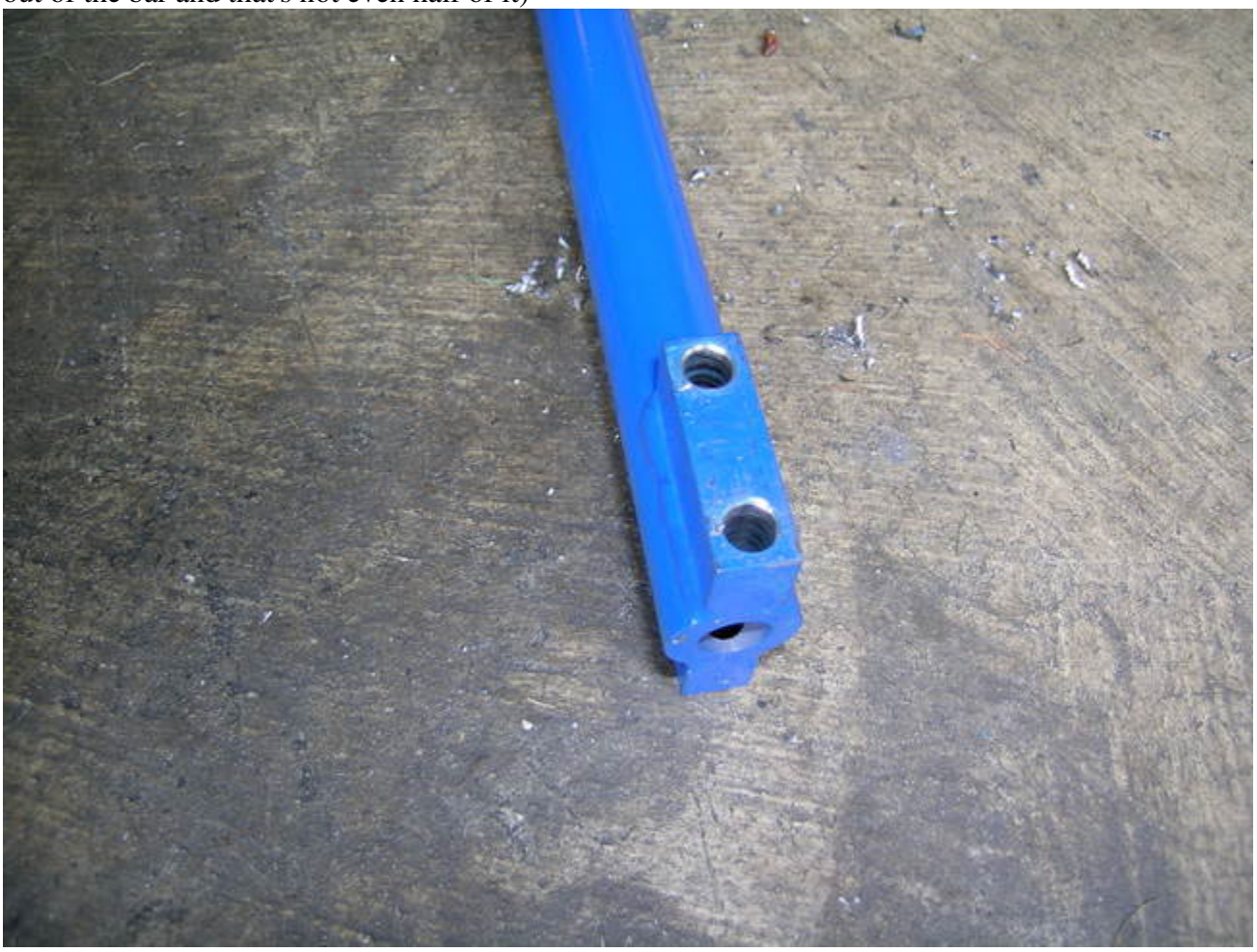
After all the holes were drilled and the area cleaned, Ray put his artistic touches on the bare metal. You'll have to excuse the Ford paint. I hope it doesn't show through too much.





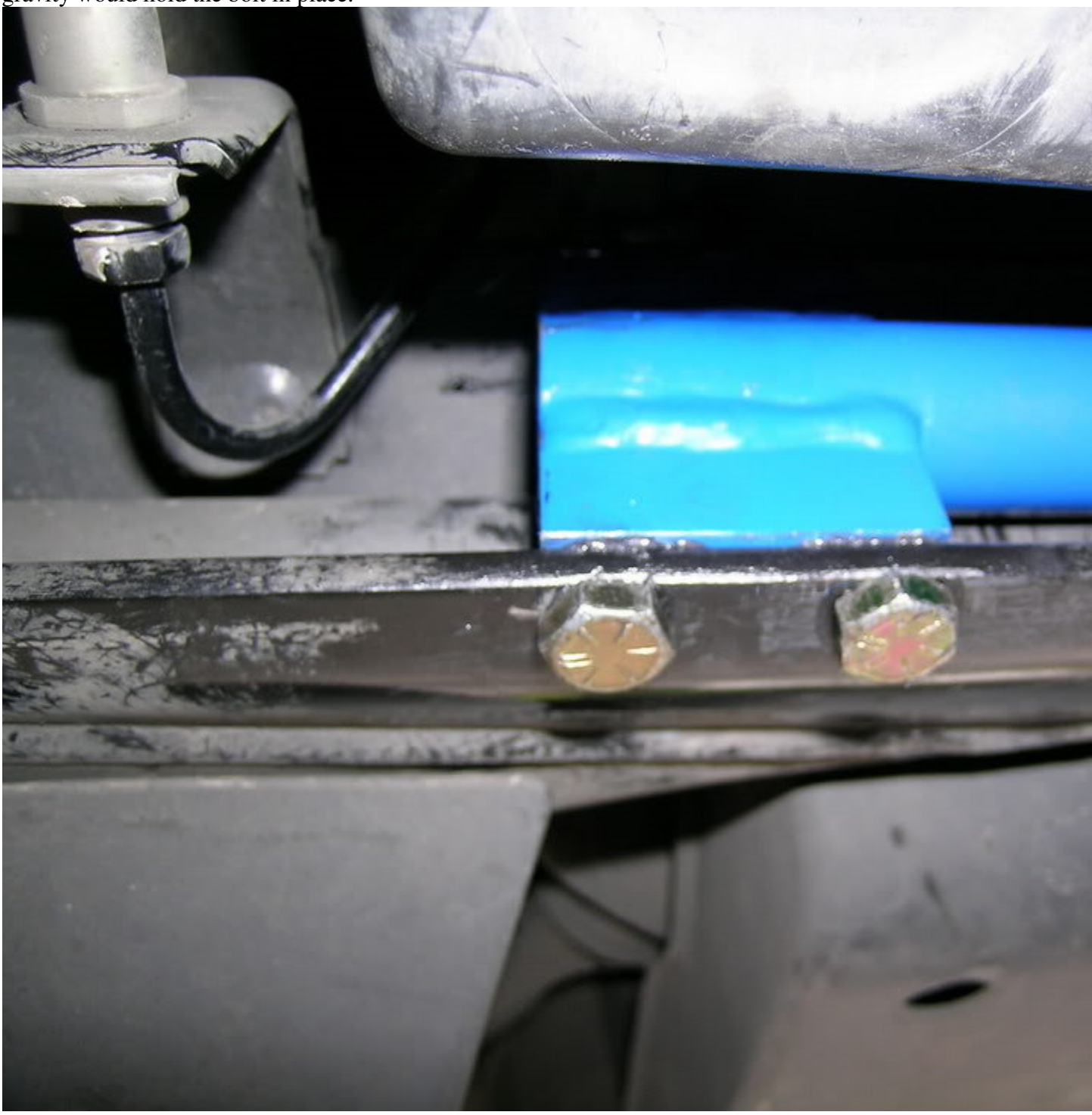
Before installing the bar, Ray insisted on getting every little metal filings out from inside the bar. We kept removing until we couldn't hear the shavings rattling around inside. It was quite a lot. But at least it reduces the rust potential by getting them out of there. Then we applied axle grease to the inside cylinders before placing the bar in the beam. (check out the shavings that just came

out of the bar and that's not even half of it)



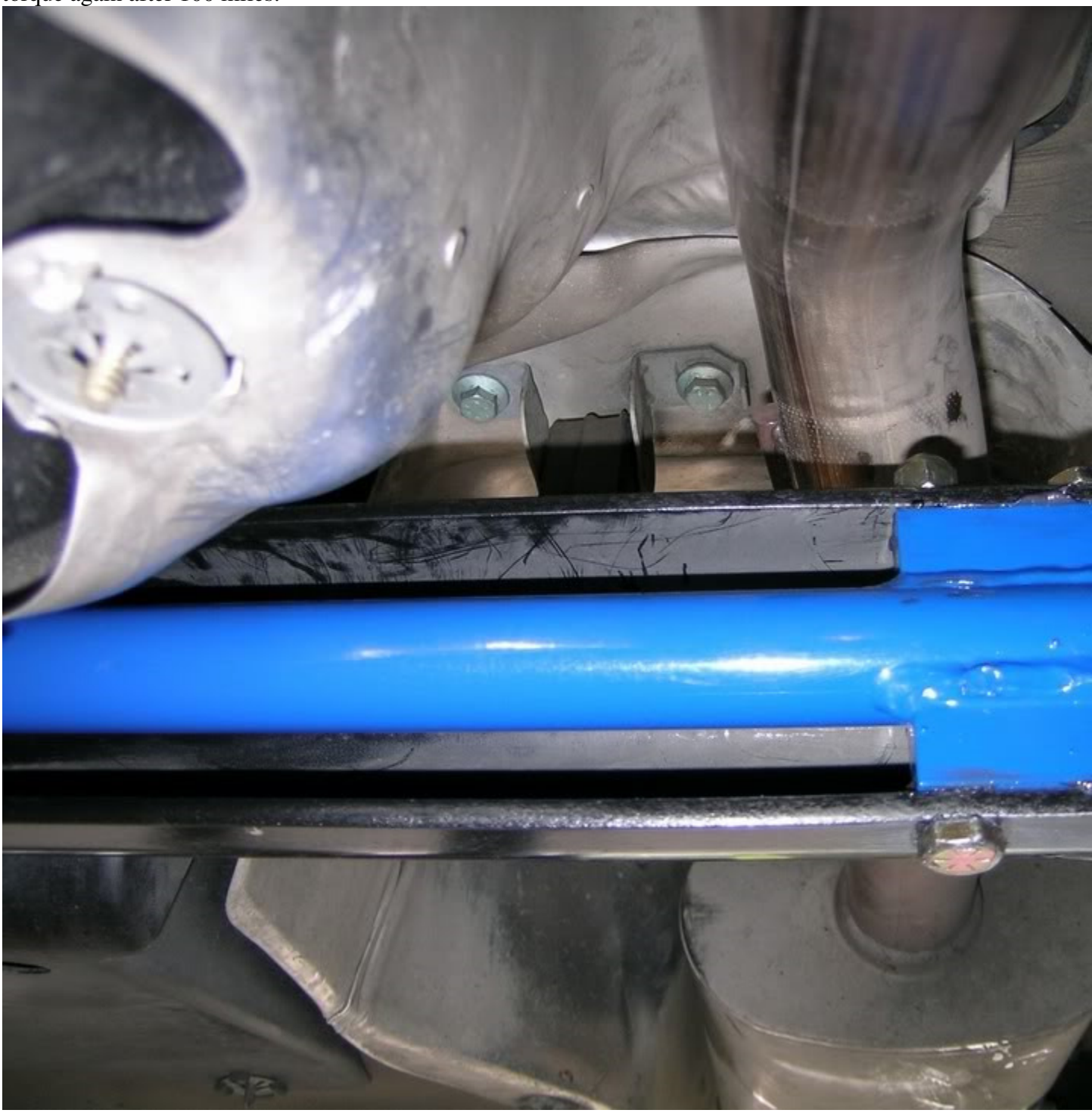
The instructions we were going off of only mentioned inserting the bolts from the top. We found this impossible with the gas tank strap in the way. Maybe this new bar is a different length or earlier vw's had a different strap point. But we had no choice but to insert from the bottom. The only advantage we could see to inserting from the top was if the nyl-nut ever backed out, at least

gravity would hold the bolt in place.

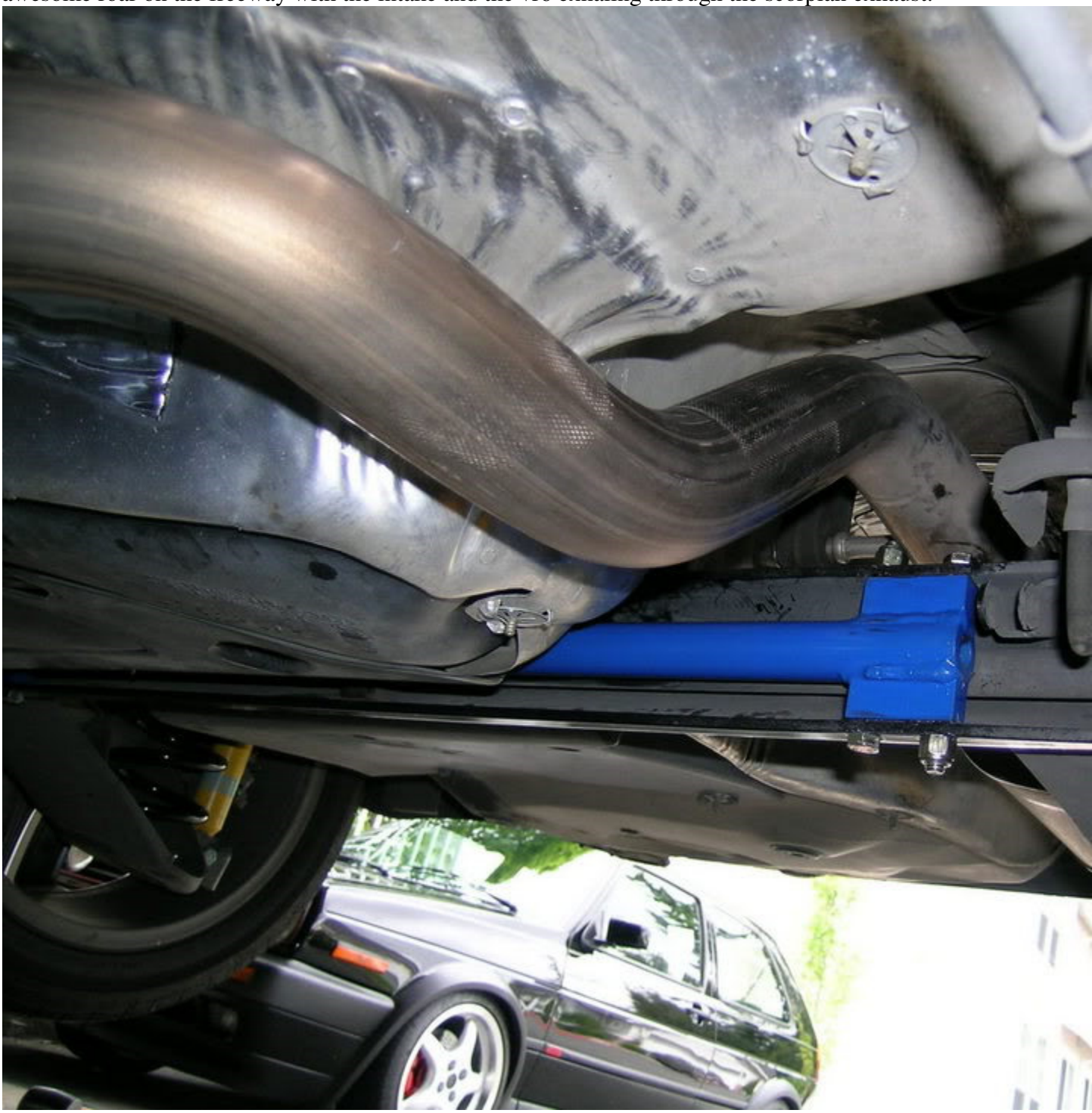


We had equally hard time inserting one of the bolts due to the exhaust pipe. Again, probably earlier vw's with the hidden tips could move out of the way. But my tips were banging on the valence and I didn't want to remove my exhaust. We were able to insert at least one of the bolts from the top. (I think the bolts inserted from the bottom look much cleaner anyway.)

The only torque figure we had was 45+ lb-ft. So we set the torque wrench at 60lbs. I'll have to torque again after 100 miles.



Ah...finally done. Note the 'POS' we had to move out of the garage so we could work. What an awesome roar on the freeway with the intake and the vr6 exhaling through the scorpian exhaust.



Driving Impressions

Well, I could tell that the ride stiffened up just a tad. Going around corners or quick steering movements happened with less body roll. I also felt like I had less front tire howling as I exited corners.

On one of the corners, I took about similar speed that Ray takes with his GTI. Yet he's running Pilot sports with his Eibach pro system and I'm running the OEM all-seasons. That just really drives home the difference a good suspension can make.

On my way home, I went over a freeway offramp/fly-over. It has a bumpy left hander and then goes into a hard right. I took it easy on the left-hander so that I don't crash into the barrier with my new suspension, but the right hander has a lot of run-off room (like 5 lanes worth) with no cars around, I nailed it pretty hard. Man, I just stuck the corner in 3rd gear, 4500rpms, WOT! This is the first time I've ever felt the fronts AND the rears start to drift simultaneously. All I can say is WOW! All the while it was soaking up the bumps and undulations without too much drama. I can't believe I'm cornering like this on all-season tires.

However, I will say that if I had no plans of ever tracking my car, I'd probably be very content with just the softsports/bilsteins and no rsb. It handles much better than stock, yet retains a good amount of understeer to keep things safe on the streets. Also, the rsb made the ride on uneven surfaces a bit more stiff.

But the rsb balances everything out better and also helps my drive out of the corner. Can't wait for some track time to really test things out at the limits.