

" THIS ARTICLE IS INTENDED FOR YOUR REFERENCE ONLY.

ACTUAL PARTS, YEARS AND BODY STYLES CONTAINED

IN THIS ARTICLE MAY DIFFER SLIGHTLY FROM YOUR APPLICATION. "

Text and photos by Joe Whitaker

We have all driven a Classic that has had a completely stuck, loose, missing or otherwise non-functional emergency (parking) brake. Not only is the emergency brake a necessity on all manual shift cars, it is also a needed safety feature on those cars equipped with automatic transmissions. The purpose of this article will be to instruct you on how to completely rebuild the emergency brake in your Classic, outlining all the different parts necessary to do so. Along with this article, we will be introducing two brand new kits that include every part available to properly rebuild your emergency brake. ([See Photo #1.](#))

Part #	Description
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20-102	Non-Convertible Emergency Brake Rebuild Kit. Includes Part #09-75, 20-11, 20-20, 20-45, 20-46(2), 20-76, 20-89, 20-91, 20-93, 34-114
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20-103	Convertible Emergency Brake Rebuild Kit. Includes Part #09-75, 20-11, 20-20, 20-46(2), 20-64, 20-76, 20-90, 20-92, 20-94, 34-114
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For the month of December, you can take advantage of great savings on these kits. (See Recession Fighters on page 30.)

1) Begin by removing both rear wheels. Remove both rear brake drums and also all rear brake shoes and related hardware. Now would be an excellent time to check the condition of the rear shoes and drums and repair as necessary. Refer to April 1992 *CCW* and Section 5 of your Shop Manual. Disengage the rear emergency brake cable end from the rear brake shoe actuating lever on each side. ([See Photo #2.](#)) Once the cable is free from the actuating lever, slip the cable sheath forward through the backing plate by compressing the retaining fingers at the rear of the sheath. ([See Photo #3.](#)) The retaining fingers can be compressed using needle nose pliers or vise-grips.

2) The front portion of the sheath on the rear cable can be disengaged from the frame by removing the small retaining clips on each side. ([See Photo #4.](#)) Now that the cable is completely free at the rear of the car, remove the $\frac{5}{16}$ -inch fine nut that secures the horseshoe-shaped equalizer to the emergency brake idler rod. ([See Photo #5.](#)) Remove the large emergency brake return spring from the flat idler bar and the body support bracket. ([See Photo #6.](#)) Next remove the cotter pins and clevis pin that secures the front cable clevis to the flat idler bar. ([See Photo #7.](#)) Pull the flat idler bar out of the support bracket and set aside. ([See Photo #8.](#))

3) Some of the original components on your original emergency brake setup may be in good enough condition to re-use. Inspect each part carefully for undue wear and rust, replace as needed. For purposes of the article, we will list each new part number so you may install a brand new part if you wish. Begin replacement of the rear emergency brake parts by installing a new flat idler bar, **Part #20-93** for non-Convertibles and **Part #20-94** for Convertibles. Be sure the notch in the bar engages the rear edge of the right hand body bracket. ([See Photo #9.](#)) Install the new horseshoe-shaped equalizer and rod **Part #20-91** for non-Convertibles and **Part #20-92** for all Convertibles. Install in the right hand idler hole and secure using a cotter pin. ([See Photo #10.](#)) Install the new emergency brake return spring **Part #20-89** for non-Convertibles and **Part #20-94** for Convertibles. ([See Photo #11.](#))

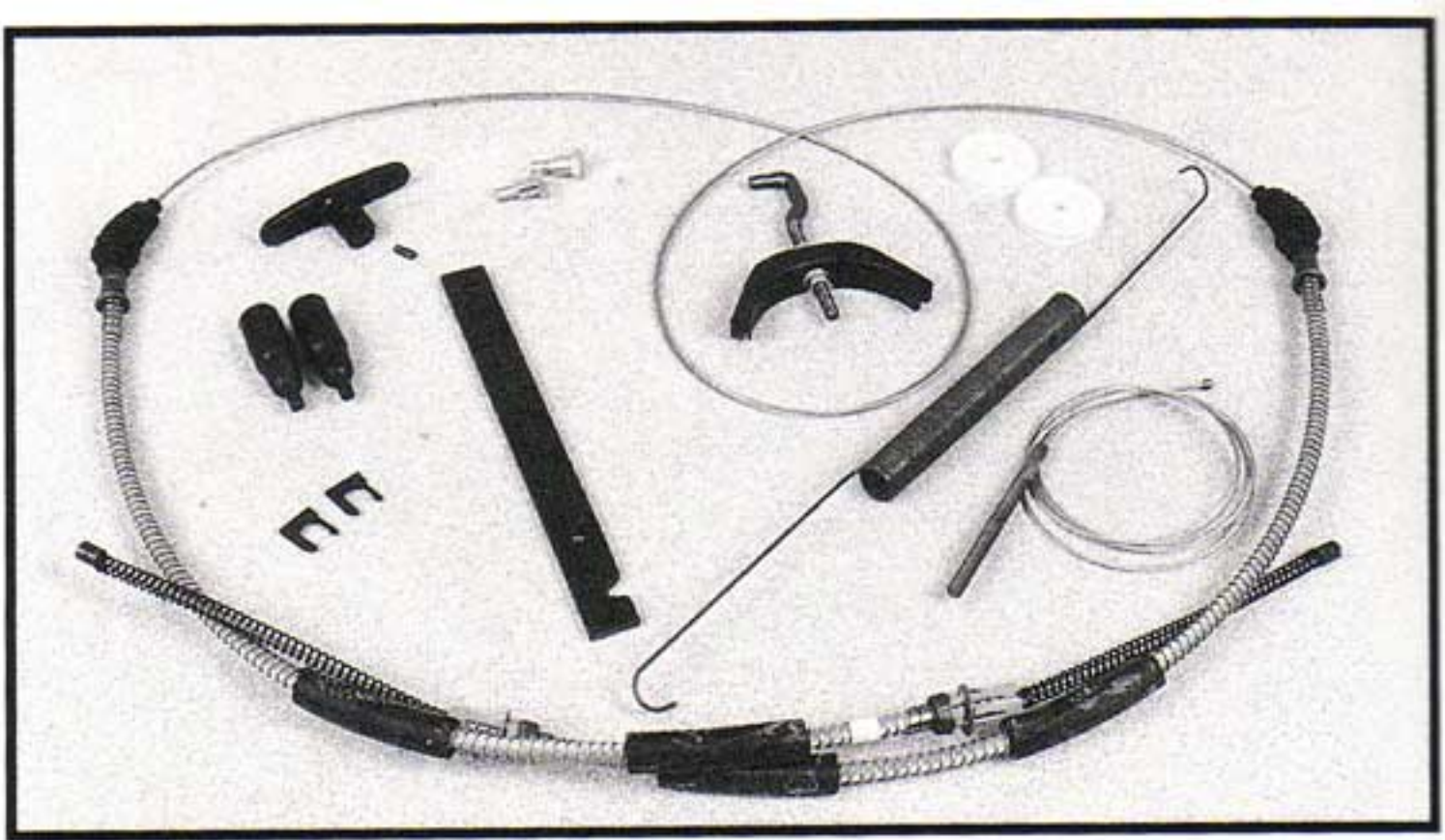


Photo #1

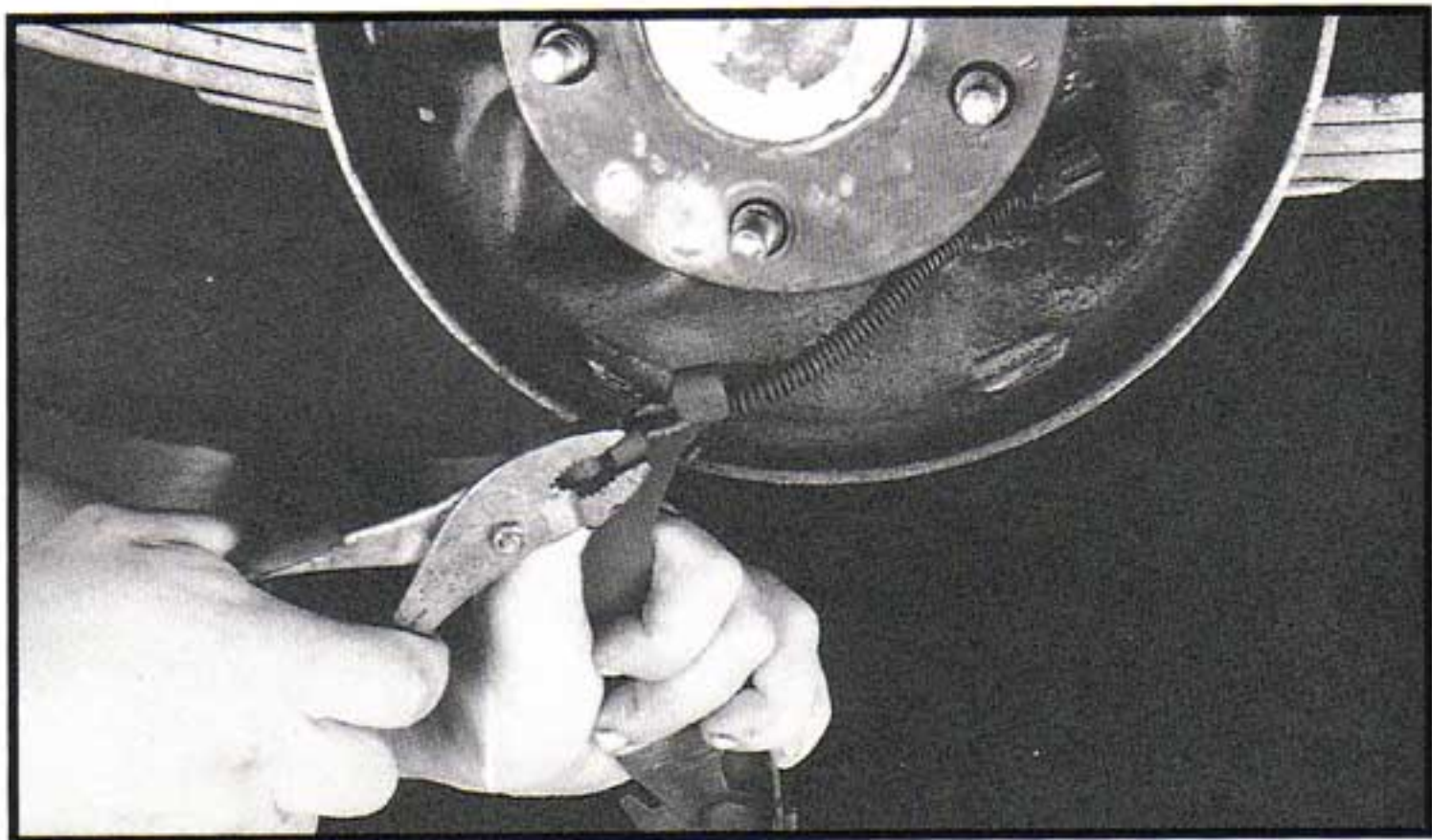


Photo #2

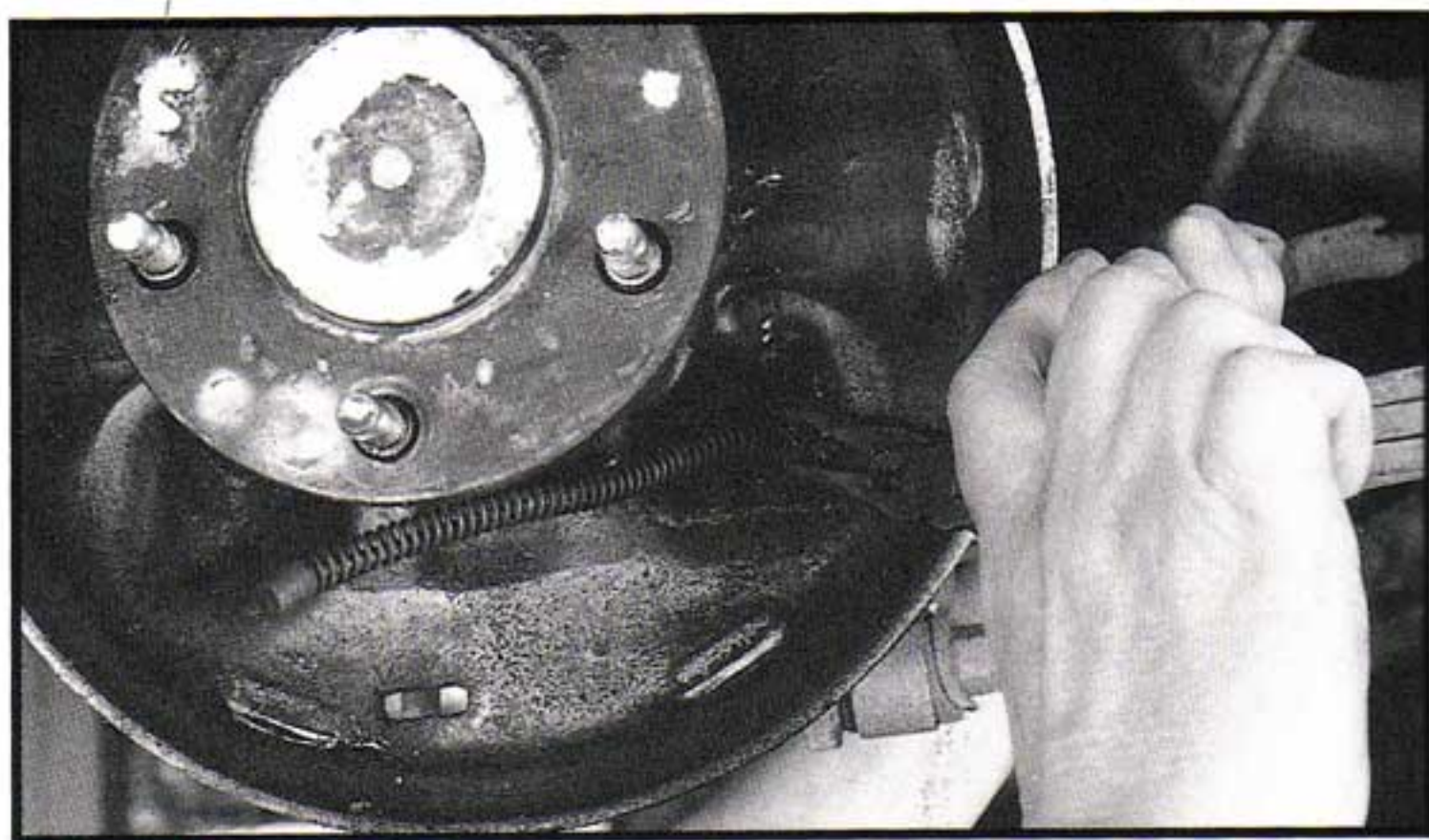


Photo #3

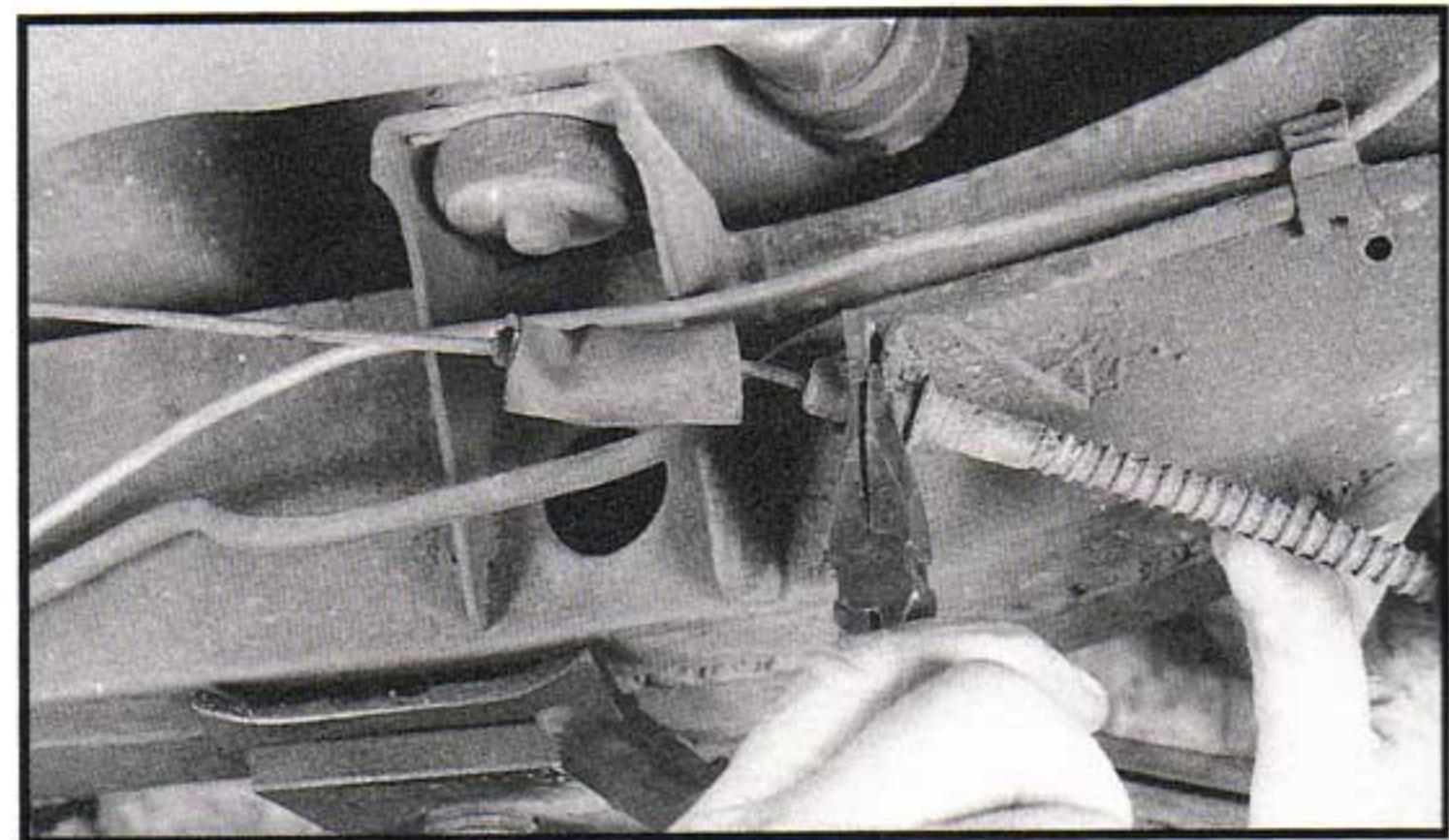


Photo #4

4) Next, the new rear cable, **Part #20-11**, may be installed. Notice that the dust boots on the new replacement rear cables are of a bellows design. The original dust boots on the rear cables were smooth rubber. (See [Photo #12.](#)) Correct original style dust boots are available as **Part #09-75**. These boots can be installed by removing one of the steel cable ends from the new rear cable, sliding the sheath and bellows boots off. Install the new original style boots in reverse order. A new cable end must be installed by either brazing on the new end or taking the cable to a shop that handles wire rigging for sailboats. They can remove and install a new cable end fairly easily.

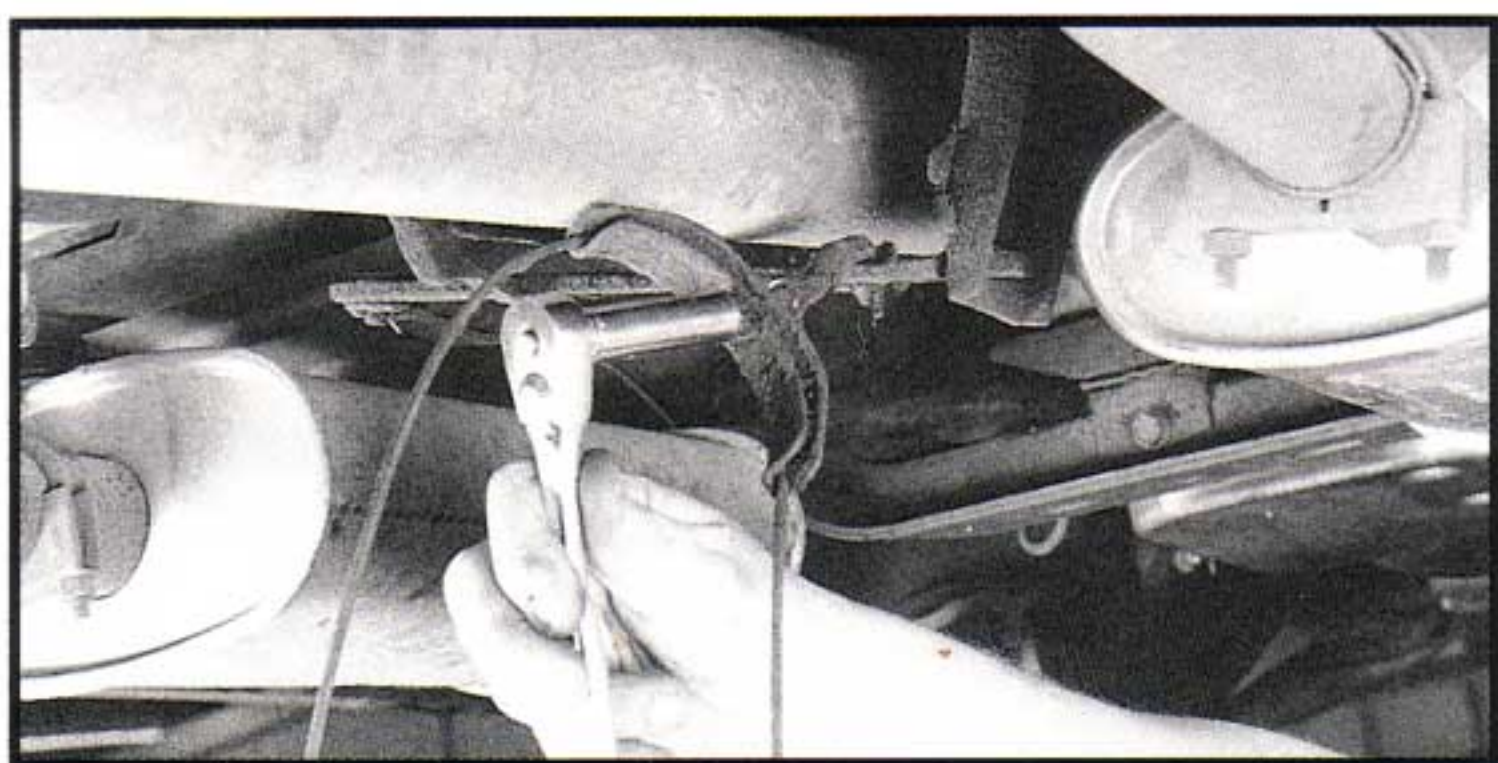


Photo #5

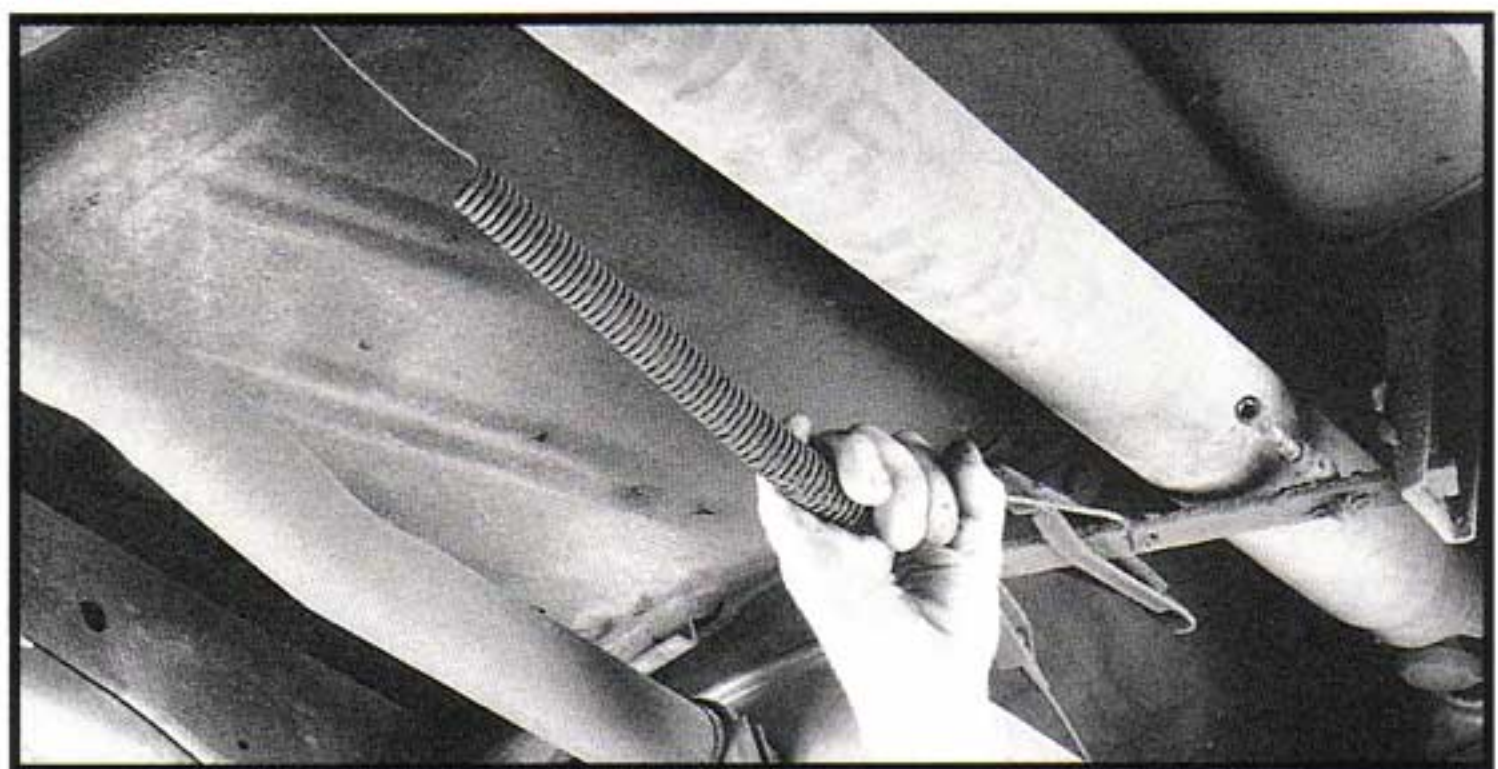


Photo #6

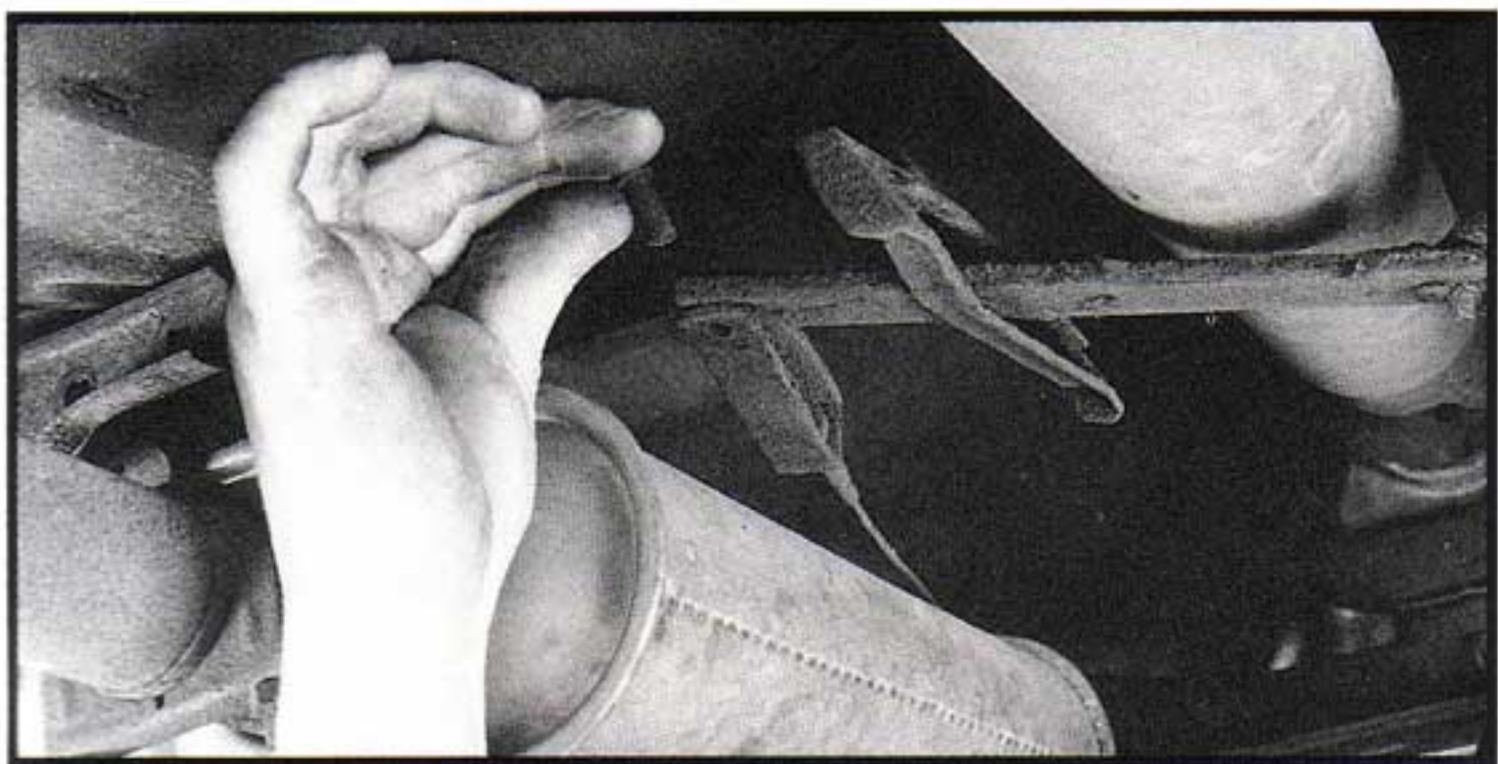


Photo #7



Photo #8

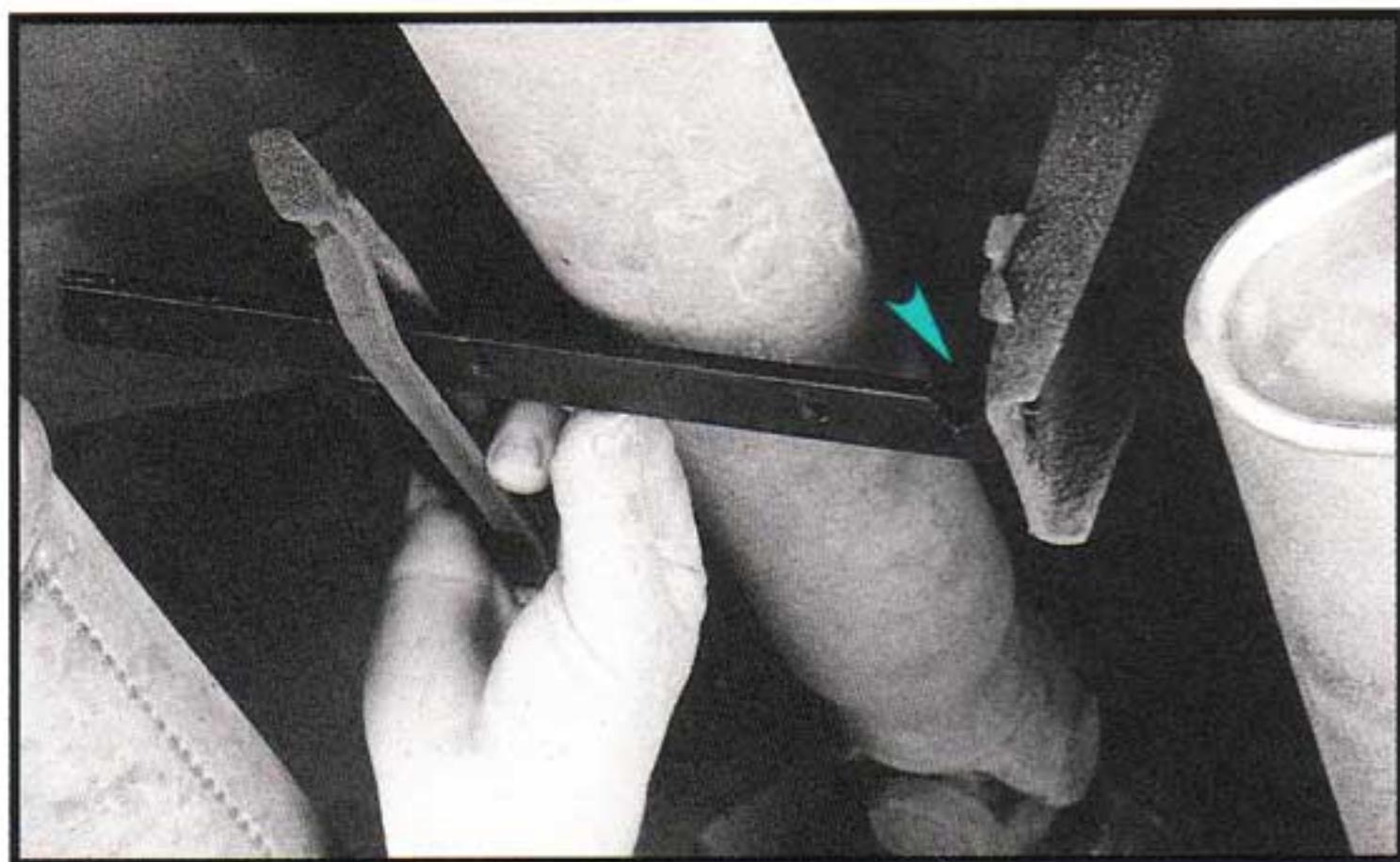


Photo #9

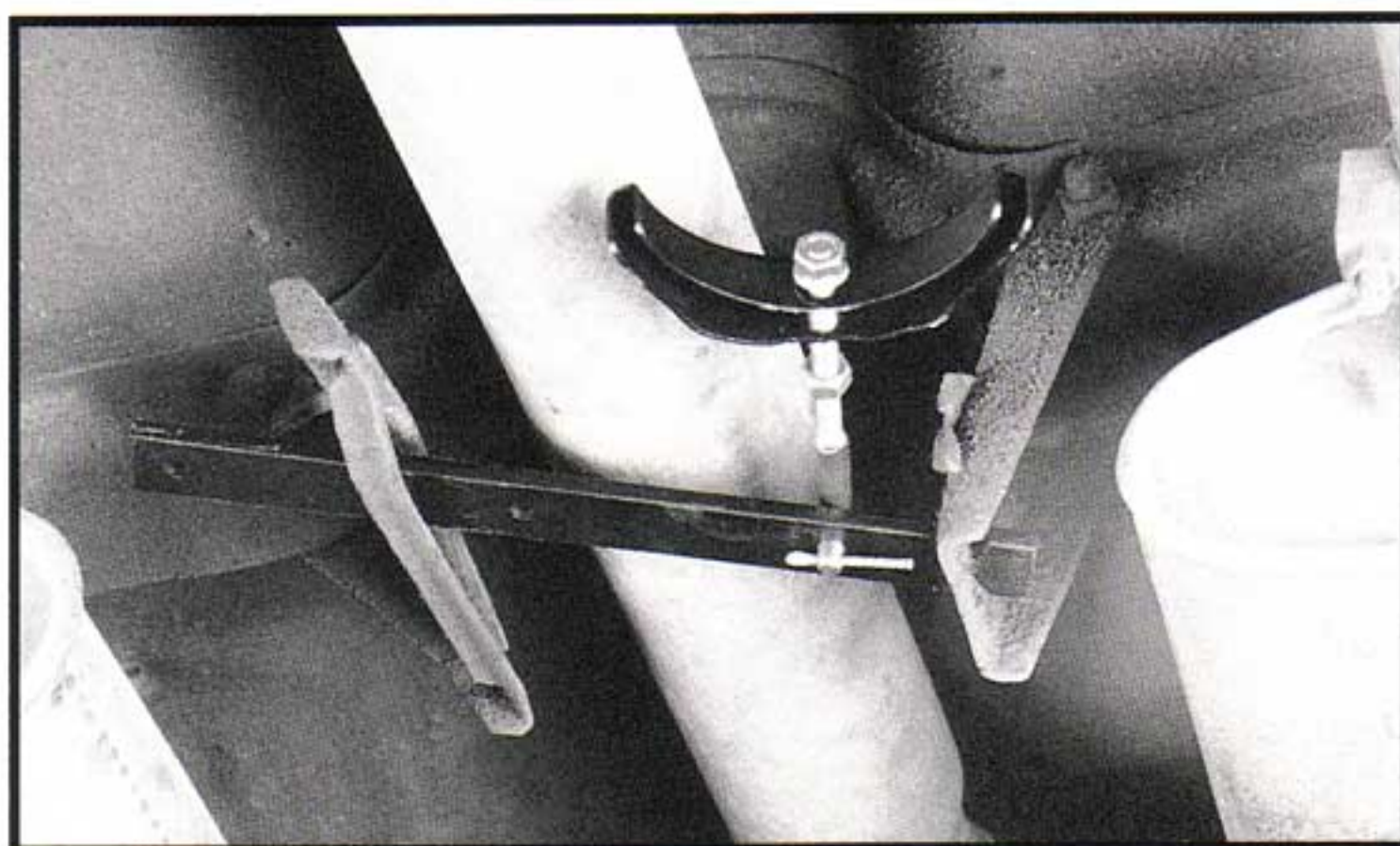


Photo #10



Photo #11

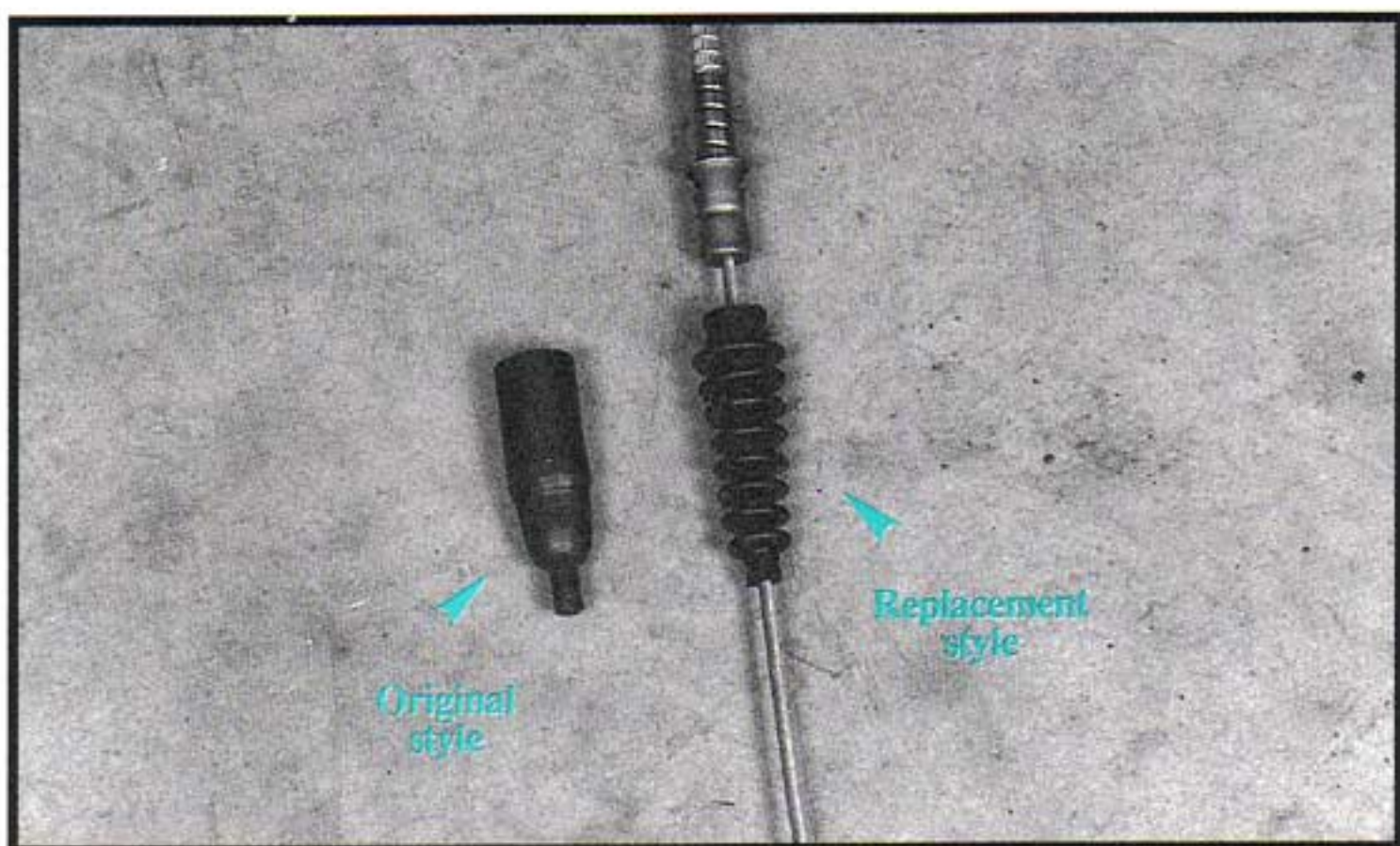


Photo #12

5) Install the new rear cable by passing the ends over top of the rear leaf springs and through the backing plate holes. Pull the ends of the cable sheath through until the new retaining fingers expand out and hold the cable in place. Attach the ends of the new rear cable to the rear brake shoe actuating lever. Install the remainder of the rear brake components; install the brake drums and rear wheels. Be sure the new rear cable is properly routed through the rear frame brackets as in Step #2, Photo #4. The new cable should be secured to the frame brackets using new rear emergency brake clips, **Part #34-114**. Once properly routed and installed, the front portion of the cable should be installed in the new horseshoe-shaped equalizer. (See Photo #13.) Install the equalizer on the idler rod and install the lockwasher and nut finger tight.

6) Begin replacement of the front emergency brake hardware by first removing the lower inner fender filler panel on the driver's side on all 1955-56 cars. Owners of 1957's will have to work behind the inner fender to accomplish the following steps. Remove the original clevis from the rear portion of the front emergency brake cable by loosening the $\frac{5}{16}$ -inch fine nut. (See Photo #14.) This clevis must be set aside and reused as it is not currently being reproduced. Also remove the lock nut from the front cable so that it may be passed through the roller brackets. Remove the emergency brake roller bolts and two rollers from the brackets on the underside of the toe panel. (See Photo #15 & 16.)

7) Inside the car pull the emergency brake handle all the way out and remove the front portion of the cable from the pull shaft. Grab the cable with your fingers, lift up and pull forward until the ball end disengages the pull shaft. (See Photo #17.) Remove the four bolts that secure the pull assembly to the toe panel and bottom of the dash. Some Classics used clutch-head bolts to secure this assembly to the dash, some used hex-head bolts. Either is correct.

8) Once the emergency brake pull handle assembly is out of the car, lay it upside down on the bench. Position the pull handle so that the back side of the leveling pin in the pull shaft lines up with the hole in the pull housing. Drive the pin out with a hammer and punch. (See Photo #18.) You may now pull the handle and shaft all the way out and set aside. If you are disassembling the pull housing further for restoration, remove the two slider catches and spring from the housing. (See Photo #19.) Be sure to note the orientation of these catches for proper reassembly. Bead blast, prime and paint the housing gloss black and set aside for later use.

9) Next remove the original pull handle from the pull shaft. Very often the small pin that secures the handle to the shaft is embedded so far that you can't grab it and pull it out with vise grips or pliers. On cars equipped with plastic handles, simply break away and peel back the plastic portion of the handle, exposing the head of the pin. If you still can't get to the pin, cut the metal portion of the handle away with a cut-off wheel to remove the handle entirely. Use the same procedure for chrome handles that can't be removed. Bead blast and clear coat the pull shaft and let dry.



Photo #13

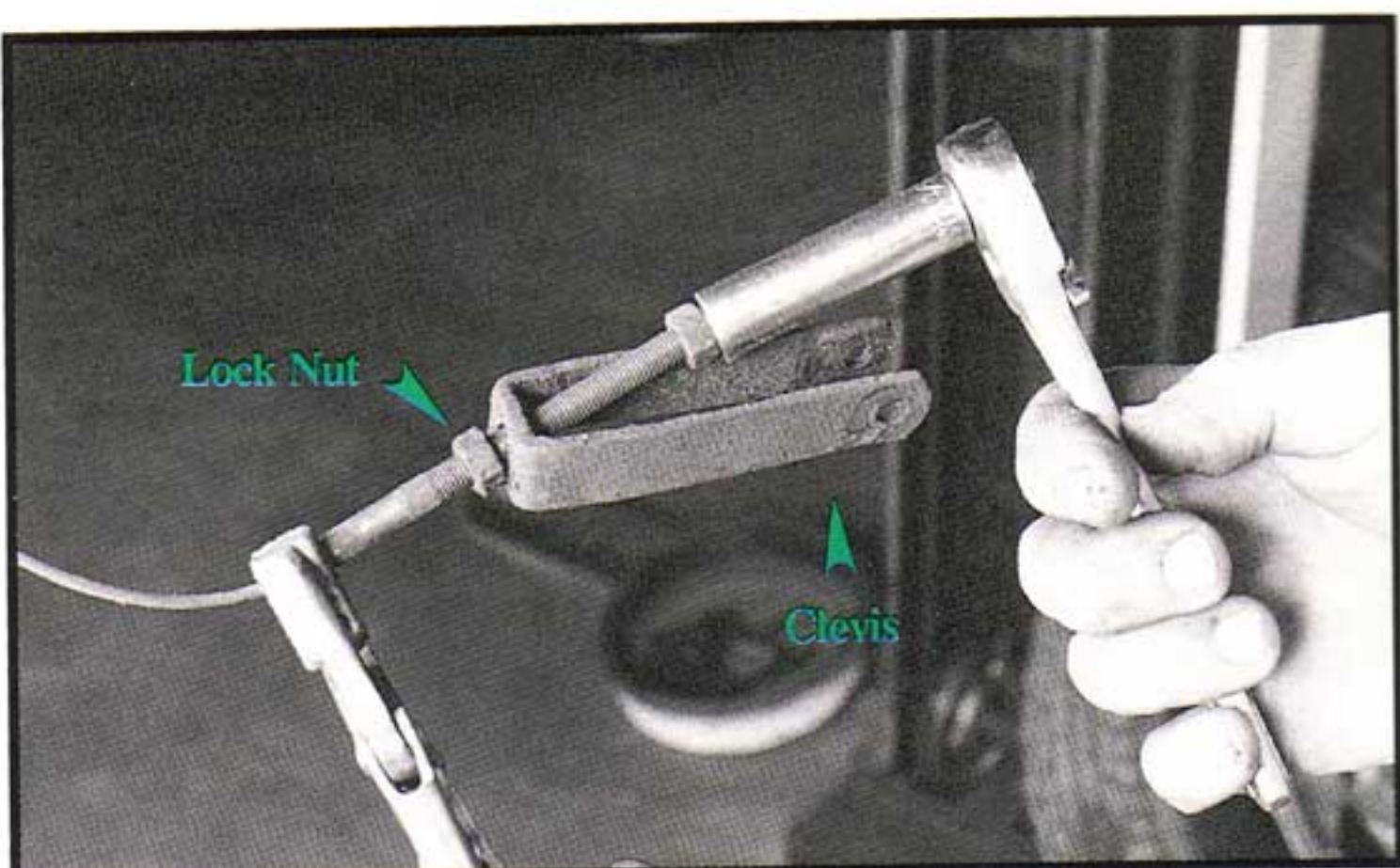


Photo #14



Photo #15



Photo #16




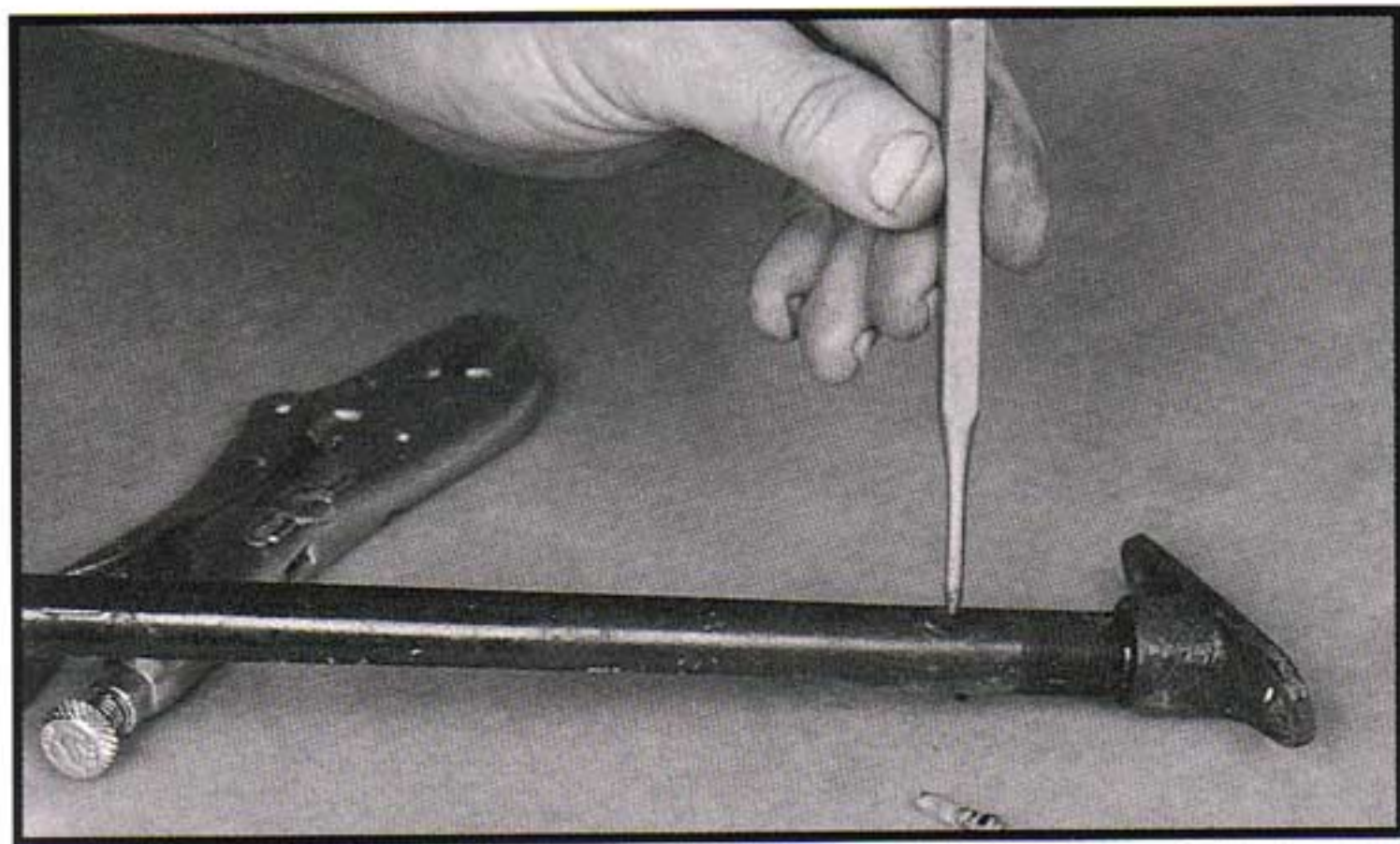
Photo #17

10) Install the new handle **Part #20-20** (black) or **Part #20-05** (chrome) using either the pin provided or the original pin ([See Photo #20.](#)) The black handle would be considered correct on all restored Classics. The chrome handle was actually a GM replacement that never appeared on factory assembled cars. Reassemble the emergency brake pull assembly and install back into the car.

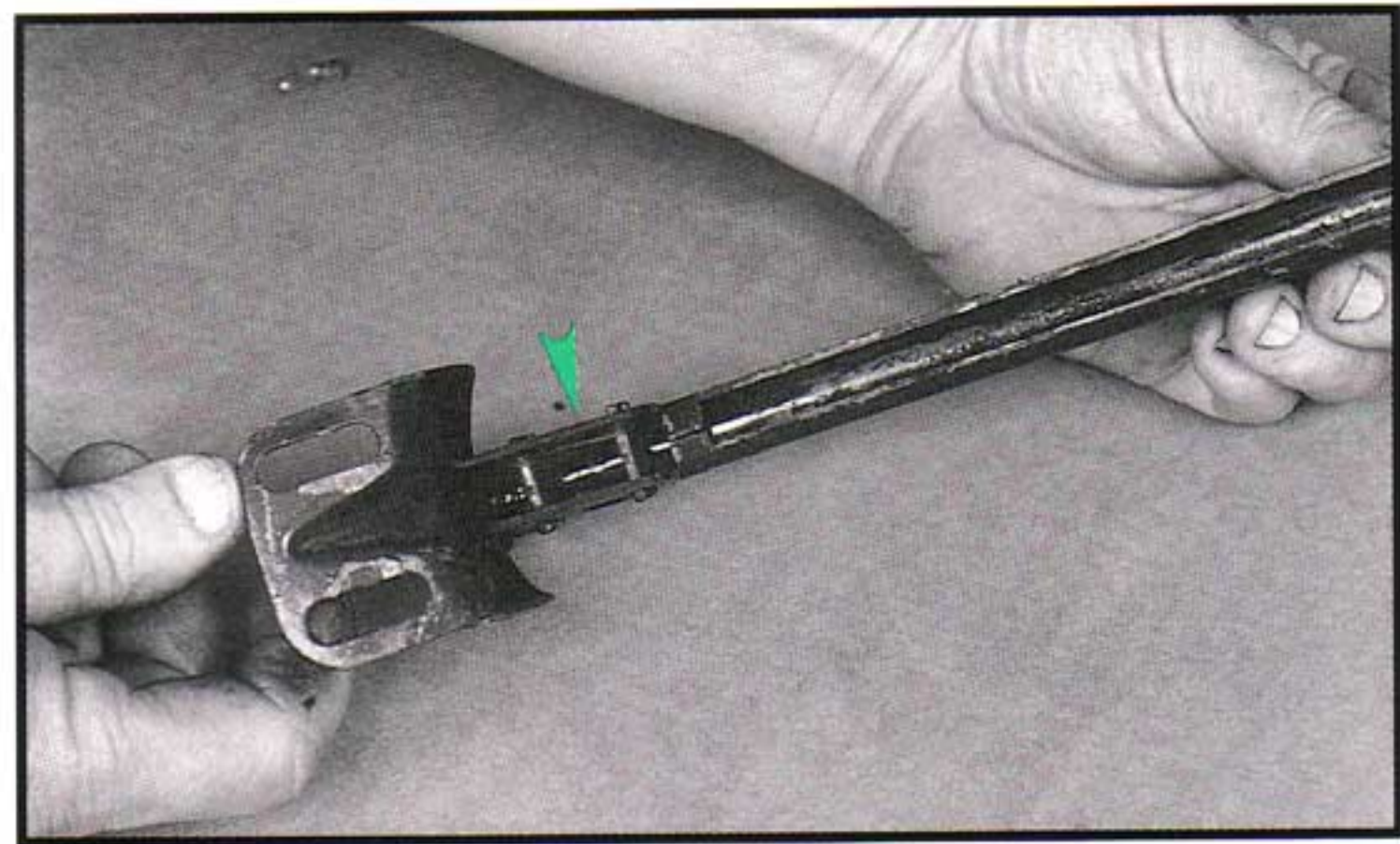
11) Install the new front emergency brake cable **Part #20-45** for non-Convertibles and **Part #20-64** for Convertibles. Pass the ball end of the cable through the toe panel from under the car and into the pull handle assembly. Engage the new ball in the reconditioned shaft. Pass the other end of the front cable through both roller brackets and let it hang down. Install new nylon rollers **Part #20-46** (2 required) and roller bolts **Part #20-76**. ([See Photo #21.](#)) Install the forward lock nut on the front emergency brake cable and slip on the original clevis removed in Step #6. Install the rear lock nut finger tight. ([See Photo #22.](#)) Attach the clevis to the flat idler bar using the original clevis pin and a new cotter pin. ([See Photo #23.](#))

12) The emergency brake rebuild should now be complete. The only requirement now is to properly adjust the front and rear cables. Adjust the front cable by loosening the forward lock nut on the front brake cable. Tighten the rear nut until the forward cable is pulled taut. The inside handle should be in the fully released position. Now the rear cable may be adjusted. Pull the emergency brake handle out “seven clicks” and leave it set. Loosen the forward lock nut on the horseshoe-shaped equalizer installed in Step #3. Tighten the rear nut until there is a slight brake drag on the rear wheels as they are rotated. Tighten the forward lock nut against the equalizer. Release the brake handle and be sure the rear wheels rotate freely. Set the brake once again and check for proper operation. Adjust further if necessary.

You now have a brand new, safe and completely functional emergency brake system on your Classic! 



[Photo #18](#)



[Photo #19](#)



Photo #20



Photo #21

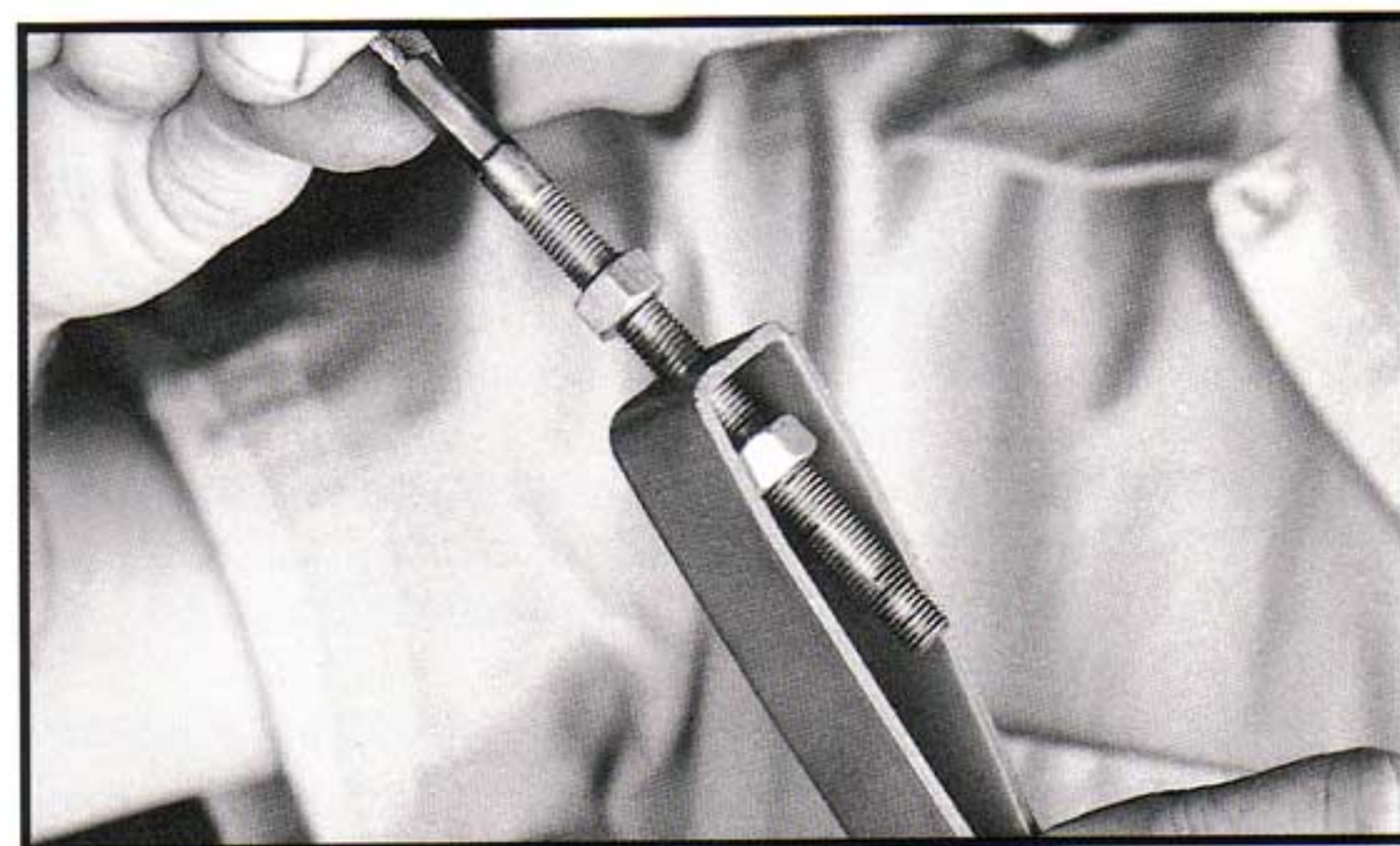


Photo #22

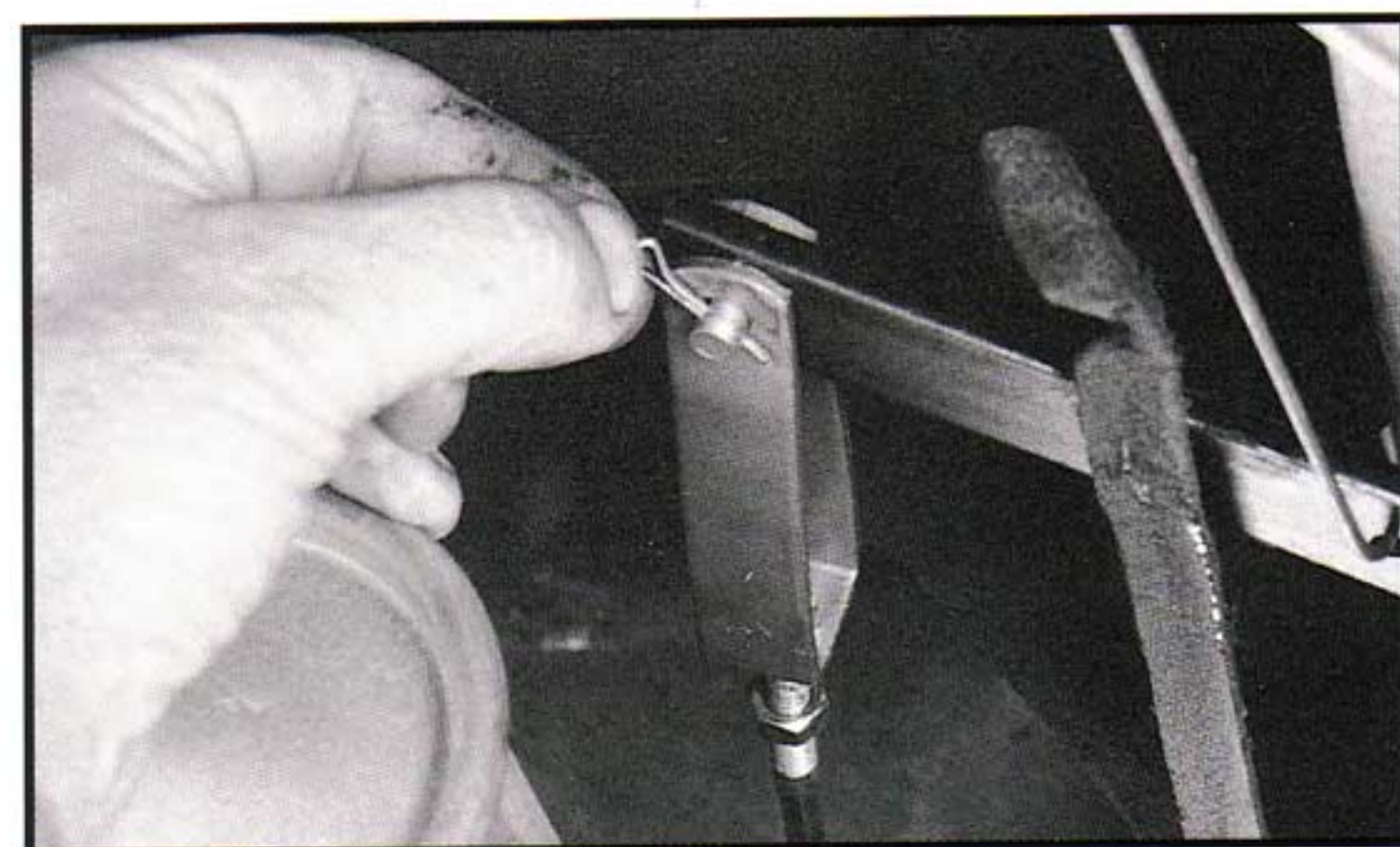


Photo #23